

27

# The Reading Teacher

RUSSELL G. STAUFFER, *Editor*  
University of Delaware

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THEME OF THIS ISSUE

**Study Type Skills in a  
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Mary C. Austin, Past-President of IRA, is Lecturer on Education and Director of the Harvard-Carnegie Reading Study at the Graduate School of Education, Harvard University. Her recent publications include *The Torch Lighters: Tomorrow's Teachers of Reading* and *Reading Evaluation*. The first publication contains the report and recommendations of the Harvard-Carnegie research staff, following a study of the preparation offered to prospective elementary school teachers of reading by colleges and universities throughout the United States. The second is co-authored with Clifford L. Bush and Mildred H. Huebner.

During the academic year 1961-62, Dr. Austin will devote full time to a study of elementary school reading programs with specific attention directed toward in-service activities offered in reading.

In June the State University of New York at Oswego presented Dr. Austin its distinguished alumnus award.



William D. Sheldon is President of IRA for 1961-1962. He is Director of the Reading Center, Syracuse University. Dr. Sheldon has written a great many articles and chapters on the subject of reading and has conducted a number of research studies, in particular reading in the elementary schools. He has supervised many doctoral candidates during the last thirteen years, many of whom are serving in reading centers throughout the United States. Dr. Sheldon serves as a consultant to schools and considers this to be a most important function.

Morton Botel, President-Elect of IRA, has been since 1956 the Assistant County Superintendent and Reading Consultant for Bucks County Schools, Pennsylvania. He is Chairman, State Reading Consultant's Team and a member of the State English Committee of the State Curriculum Commission. Dr. Botel is the author of several publications, including *Techniques for Teaching Phonics and Other Word Skills*, *Multi-Level Reading Skilltext*, *How to Teach Reading*, and the *Multi-Level Readability Technique*. His present interests center around the effectiveness of individualized spelling to the total language arts program and the development of elementary school mathematics materials which minimize reading problems.



## The Secret Ingredients

TO BE A FORMIDABLE scholar is to avoid pledges, to observe, and then observe again—unaffected, unbiased, unbribable, and unafrighted. No iota of formidableness can come to anyone, even though the wide universe is full of good, but through his toil. Deal with cause and effect, chain the wheel of chance, work and acquire — this will bring you peace and understanding. And these are but a few of the ideas that may be gleaned from Emerson's "Self-reliance." Are these the secret ingredients?

When the Board of Directors of IRA chose study skills as a theme for this issue did they intend to mark an anniversary of a perennial hope or to direct our attention to the need for work? No one questions the idea that reading is fun. Neither should anyone question the idea that, in his right state, man is *Man Thinking*. To *Man Thinking* the past instructs and the future invites. Could it be that an emphasis on reading to entertain and reading for fun has led us to forfeit the privilege of making the reading man a scholar? Perhaps a re-reading of "The American Scholar" would be timely and wise.

In various articles in this issue are appeals for the development of self-direction in learning, the skills of self-managed learning, the ability and inclination to engage in the thoughtful reconstruction of ideas, intelligent initiative, alternatives to be tried and evaluated in action, inquiry and discovery, and so on. These are words representing ideas that are vibrant,

bracing, and zestful in quality. They suggest clear-sightedness, quickness, and penetration. They suggest that a high aim of reading is to develop the power and sensibility of the mind.

If the child is to get the full benefit of what he learns, we must, as Bruner points out, have a way of honoring the connectedness of knowledge. Children must be taught to be free of intellectual dishonesty, to suspend judgment as they examine facts and relate them, to extrapolate, to make tentative leaps. For this the method of instruction should be to lead the child to discover for himself. Are these the rudiments of skills and habits for study type reading?

Paul Woodring, in the April 15, 1961, *Saturday Review*, writes about "The Meaning of Excellence." Wisely, he cautions that excellence is not achieved merely by piling on work or by shifting emphasis from poetry (and reading for fun) and history to science and mathematics. The ultimate goal, he says, is to teach free men the ability to make wise, independent decisions based upon accurate facts, clear reasoning, and understanding.

If we must, in our thinking about the secret ingredients in reading instruction, engage in a dialogue, we might do so in the manner used by John Ciardi when he wrote recently about poetry as knowledge. In our dialogue, to the proposition that mind in good order leads to knowledge, we might submit that the variables in life may defy the over-systematic mind.—R.G.S.

## The Art of Asking Questions

by PHILIP G. SMITH

SOCRATES evidently believed that prior to a man's earthly existence his soul resided in a realm of pure form. In this perfect abode man's soul lived in intimate acquaintance with the pure idea or essence of all things. He thus attained knowledge of an ideal unchanging reality.

As a result of the birth trauma and the imprisoning of his soul in an imperfect material world of changing objects his knowledge of the ideal was erased from his conscious mind. Gradually, however, at least some men, especially when helped by a sagacious teacher, were able to recollect portions of this perfect knowledge. Indeed, if man did not already possess a dim, subconscious grasp of the essence of truth, beauty, and goodness, there would be no point in instructing him in such matters, for he would be unable to recognize what was at issue in any particular case. There would be little point in discussing, for example, whether this act was more just than that act, unless the people involved in the discussion had some prior understanding of the nature of true justice.

Given this metaphysic, teaching became a matter not of telling but of aiding the student to recall what he already subconsciously knew. Socrates therefore developed his method of teaching by questioning. He invited his students to explain to him the nature of truth, beauty, and goodness. He challenged their imperfect an-

swers by asking the kind of additional questions that would lead them to recognize the inadequacy of their ideas. Under such prodding a student was led to construct and reconstruct his thinking, moving ever closer to the perfect understanding his soul had enjoyed prior to its being shackled to this world of imperfect, shimmering copies or shadows of reality.

Today one seldom encounters anyone with such a fanciful view of the nature of reality, yet the Socratic method of teaching is generally recognized as a useful procedure. Why? It is simply because an important aim of education is the development of the ability and inclination to engage in the thoughtful reconstruction of ideas. This objective is not attained when teachers and books merely tell students all the right questions and answers. A really good teacher is never a blabbermouth.\*

### The Sophist Tradition

In contrast to the Socratic method of teaching, the professional teachers of ancient Greece would, for a fee, impart knowledge and wisdom through lecturing. These professional teachers were known as Sophists or wise men, and in spite of the lip service that has always been accorded the Socratic method it is the Sophist

\*Based on a remark made by Professor O. Hobart Mowrer during the Reading-Thinking Seminar of the University of Delaware Reading-Study Center, April, 1961.

tradition that has dominated formal education down through the ages. In the medieval universities, for example, the professors were in possession of various manuscripts that set forth the expert knowledge and opinion of the times. The professors, again for a fee, would simply read aloud these manuscripts in the presence of students (and this is the literal meaning of "to lecture") while the students copied, in full or in part, what was read. This was, after all, a more efficient means of disseminating the contents of the manuscripts than permitting students, one at a time, to read and copy these words of wisdom. Even today, when the teacher is in possession of specialized knowledge and expert judgment that can not be made readily available to students in any other way, lecturing remains a valuable method of instruction.

After the invention of the printing press, lecturing, in its literal sense, became increasingly gratuitous. An impartial observer of our developing civilization might have predicted at this point that as printed material became increasingly available schools would go out of business. But the Sophist tradition of collecting fees for teaching was too well established, and the sophisticated teacher quickly took up the slack by developing the rituals of assignment making and recitation—and the greater of these was recitation. And so it came about that the descendants of the Sophists found themselves, as teachers, *asking questions*.

The dull routine of asking a question to see if the students had read

the assignment, listening to a student recite, making an entry in the grade book, then asking another question, then listening to more recitation—all this became so stupendously monotonous that only the most unimaginative teachers could stand it. Three new devices were, therefore, invented: the workbook, the objective test, and the thought question. The workbook and the objective test presumably took care of the matter of determining whether the students had faithfully read the assignments, and the thought question was designed to see if students could think with the information gained in contrast to recalling what had been read.

#### **Asking Questions Thoughtfully**

Unfortunately, the art of asking questions is more than a matter of posing "thought questions" versus "memory questions." Indeed, if the reason for introducing questions is to stimulate the development of the inclination and ability to engage in the thoughtful reconstruction of ideas, then the initial question and the initial answer is not of crucial importance. In 1924 Hullfish (5) noted that insofar as teaching students to think is concerned, "the question slips into an insignificant position, whereas the manner in which the answer is handled looms up as the important factor." What is finally important is that this first exchange of question and answer be used to initiate the "pleasant collaboration" of which Maslow (6) speaks, so that students and teacher together may explore the meaning of what is being learned.

Before the knowledge possessed by teachers and recorded in books can become knowledge possessed by students, something must happen that is, perhaps, not entirely unlike what happens when a cow chews her cud. The artful teacher initiates and sustains the kind of thoughtful discourse that helps students ruminate and organize ideas and thus, as Bruner (2) has pointed out, to "cross the barrier from learning into thinking."

There is no magic for devising thought questions. Whatever questions are asked should be asked thoughtfully, for as a general rule, questions asked mechanically tend to elicit mechanical responses; while, as Glasser (3) has shown, an increase in the student's thoughtfulness can be engendered by a thoughtful teacher. By the very nature of the teaching act every teacher is in a position to introduce a reflective quality into his relationship with students, and it is this quality of experience, not a set of right answers, that the teacher's questions should evoke.

It follows, of course, that when a teacher undertakes this sort of questioning, the outcome cannot be finely predicted and hence the teaching cannot be programmed with any exactness. This does not mean, however, that artful questioning cannot be planned far in advance. Any teacher who has a knowledge of the subject that runs somewhat beyond the textbook, and a knowledge of his students that runs beyond a casual acquaintance can imaginatively project many of the right answers, and even many of the wrong answers that

his initial questions will elicit. He can then plan the further questions he will raise, in the case of right answers, in order to help students gain control of the evidence and integrate the answer into a developing body of digested knowledge. By anticipating some of the wrong answers the teacher can plan the questions and comments that will introduce the evidence that challenges students to reconstruct their initial answers. The teacher may even have plans up his sleeve for taking advantage of the opportunity, just in case it arises, of leading one or more students into the exciting adventure of discovering and testing the basic principles or broad generalizations that make a logical organization of a given subject matter possible.

The beginning teacher, or any teacher beginning to take reflective teaching seriously, should remember, first, that even the master teacher does not bat a thousand, and second, that experiments with reflective teaching, as reported by Bayles (1), indicate that "even an experienced teacher does not do as well during the first year of reflective teaching as, with reasonable effort, she or he can expect to do in subsequent years." Finally, the preparation for artfully posing leading questions can be done with just as much care and thoughtful attention to detail as is used in preparing, say, a set of lecture notes. It would obviously be a mistake for a teacher to attempt to sustain a thoughtful discourse by reading his lines from a set of prepared notes, but, on the other hand, there is no reason why he could not occasionally, even

in the middle of a fast moving play of ideas, say, with a contagious twinkle in his eye, some such thing as, "Wait a minute! Let me check my notes. Last night I thought of just the right question to ask in case someone said what you just said."

### Some Pitfalls to Avoid

Aristotle noted long ago that in the arts we learn by doing. This is certainly true of the art of asking questions. Many teachers naturally hesitate to initiate the kind of unpredictable open-ended discourse that gives students a chance to put their knowledge and themselves together, yet many of these same teachers would rapidly gain confidence in the process if they would just get their feet wet. While no formula for success can be given, there are some pitfalls to be avoided that can be pointed out in advance.

*Do not enter a competition with students to see who is the cleverest or who can have the last word.* It is the teacher's responsibility to set the intellectual tone or climate in the classroom, and when ideas are at issue personalities should not be. If the teacher will keep in mind that the purpose of the discourse is a cooperative exploration of ideas, then he may be able to resist the temptation to use the exchange as a means of putting students in their place or showing them that they are not so smart as they think they are.

It is true that teen-agers sometimes become quite smart alec. Obviously, they need an example of thoughtful adult behavior. They need to see how

a mature individual enjoys discovering that his ideas are wrong or inadequate just as much as discovering that they are useful or correct. In the game of ideas there need be no poor losers, for everyone involved wins or loses together according to whether the game is well played.

*Do not require students immediately to defend every opinion ventured.* Especially when discussing controversial matters it is important that students be given the opportunity to express ideas in a non-committed fashion. There is the old story about the young lady who, when asked what she believed about a certain controversial matter, replied, "How can I tell what I believe until I've heard what I'm going to say?" Students need opportunities, on the one hand for ventilating those patterns of meaning that have been thoughtlessly acquired through early social conditioning, and on the other, to try out the tentative reconstructions that are coming about as a result of their widening experience. In either case, a line of questioning that too insistently demands that every idea ventured be defended is likely to cause the student to give up the exploration of ideas in favor of a last ditch defense for the integrity of his own person. In short, there are times when the teacher should view student responses as role playing, allowing each student to see for himself how various points of view sound when expressed in his own words without running the risk of public embarrassment simply because he is unable adequately to defend the stand he has taken.

It is easy for the articulate adult insensitively to smother the budding edges of intellectual independence, especially when the buds are protectively covered with blustering or flippant remarks. Yet if Dewey was even approximately correct in referring to education as a process of continuous growth, then the most thwarting thing a teacher can do is to scratch and bruise the viable edges of young personalities into a mass of scar tissue. Artful questioning, therefore, temporarily sets aside right and wrong in favor of a more objectively gentle explication of meaning. It is thus that a classroom climate is created and sustained which, in the long run, enables students to develop responsible commitments. Teachers who can create a reflective climate need not be constantly concerned about whether students are developing a proper seriousness and self-control. For as Hullfish (4) has pointed out "Nothing is more disciplinary than the process of thinking itself."

### Teaching Machines

Today no remarks about methods of teaching seem complete without some comment on the programmed materials that are being prepared for the so-called teaching machines. Theoretically it might be possible to build a Socrates machine that, operating on feedback, would continually reprogram itself in order to sustain a line of questioning that would lead the student through a reconstruction of his own ideas. This is not, however, a likely development for the near future. On the other

hand, it is very likely that programmed material will perform the Sophist function in teaching better than most of us have done it in the past.

There is a tremendous challenge and opportunity here. In order to use programmed material to best advantage the teacher will need to plan both preparatory and follow-up experiences to help students develop ways of processing, digesting, and integrating the important facts and principles that have been programmed. Through a critical use of programmed instruction we are almost sure to discover more about how people of various ages and abilities learn, and eventually much of the preparatory and follow-up experiences may themselves be programmed. Nevertheless, the Socratic method of teaching through thoughtful questions that stimulate the construction and reconstruction of ideas will remain the heart of the education process. Let us hope that the developing science of education will make it possible once more for the *art of teaching* to be seriously pursued. One may even hope that the modern teacher, like Socrates, may some day be accused of being such an artful questioner that he has wrought a basic reconstruction of the ideational patterns of his students.

*(Dr. Smith is an Associate Professor of Education at Indiana University. He is a member of the American Philosophical Society, the John Dewey Society, and is currently President of the Ohio Valley Philos-*

*(Continued on Page 37)*

## How to Make a Student

by ALICE MIEL

WHEN AN entire issue of *THE READING TEACHER* is devoted to study skills, it means that such skills are considered very important. We want our girls and boys to be equipped to study. Books are written about good study habits. Young people have "flunked out" of college because they have not learned to study.

To many, the word *study* calls up a picture of an individual carrying out an assigned learning task for later testing by a teacher. Skill in deriving information from verbal and other symbols is considered basic to successful studying. But is not more meaning carried by the word?

A long-standing habit of looking into word origins sent the writer to White's Latin-English dictionary for information about the parent word *studere*. "To be eager, zealous; to take pains, busy one's self, or strive" were the first meanings given. Then came the special application, "to apply one's self to learning." That bit of word history explains the definition of *study* given in Webster's dictionary, "a process of acquiring by one's own efforts knowledge of a subject."

It may be useful, then, to think of ourselves as engaged in teaching study skills in reading for the purpose of *developing students*, individuals who have acquired both the disposition and the skills for obtaining knowledge on their own. True

enough, the word *student* is loosely used today. Children in the elementary school are called pupils, but as they leave sixth grade and move to the junior high school they become "students."

Everyone knows that it takes more than an extra year of living and a transfer to a new level of the school to achieve the stature of a real student. Even at the senior high school and college level there are many students scarcely deserving of the name. The fault often is not theirs, however. Their teachers have not known well enough how to help them become independent, zealous learners.

How is a student made? In part, by teaching study skills, to be sure, for such skills are fundamental equipment for the student. But more is required. The genuine student also has a desire to learn, he applies *himself*.

### The Difficulty of Developing Students

The making of a student begins very early, long before the label seems at all appropriate. For that reason it behooves the kindergarten teacher, the first grade teacher, and every teacher thereafter to consider the kind of impact he may be having on a potential student. "Seat work" may be the first in a long series of experiences that help a child learn to be dependent on someone else to man-

age his learning for him. Having his pace for reading down a page and for turning pages constantly set by someone else may contribute to the dependency. Having his reading regularly assigned and tested by "comprehension" questions may also retard progress the child might have made toward becoming a student. Reading primarily to write book reports may make the process fairly complete. The individual who emerges from such a succession of exercises in dependency still caring enough about reading to pursue it out of choice has developed a student's attitude toward reading in spite of his schooling, not because of it.

What may have led up to the ground-covering attitude revealed by two fourth-grade girls in the following anecdote?

Several children in a fourth grade had been reading the fifth-grade basal reader because they were "fast" readers. A visitor to their classroom found them doing exercises in the workbook which accompanied the reader and asked two of the children whether they thought they would be able to use the synonyms which they were busily inserting in the blanks on one page.

The children's replies were interesting. Sally said, "Oh we don't have to do that unless they are in the book."

Betty joined in, "You see, we are the ones who can read better, so we get to go into harder work all the time. This is a fifth-grade book and we will be ready for another one soon."

"So," Sally continued, "if we can do the work in the book, we get to go on. We just have to know the work in the book."

It is impossible to say how many children throughout the nation are approaching reading tasks as Saily and Betty were. It is perfectly clear, however, that those young ladies were not developing study skills in any true

sense; they could hardly be considered on the road to becoming students.

To teach study skills in such a way that each individual becomes really *skillful* is a demanding task in itself. To add the dimension of contributing to the development of a student, with all that is thus implied in relation to attitude formation, may seem overwhelming. Yet, we can aim at no less. The ability to study is of little value if it goes largely unused throughout life. Therefore, we have a right to expect that teachers will apply their best efforts to the making of students. Teachers, in turn, have a right to expect the most expert and sympathetic help possible as they put forth this effort.

### **Cooperative Procedures and the Reading Program**

The writer is no believer in panaceas but would like to offer in the remainder of this paper a general way of working which has much promise both for developing individual skillfulness in studying and for fostering the initiative characteristic of the student. This way of working is a cooperative way. It includes a whole constellation of procedures for maintaining a useful partnership in the teaching-learning process, for giving the young person an opportunity to become an increasingly independent learner.

The suggestion that cooperative procedures be employed in the classroom as a way of improving the reading program is intended for the teacher who has already made a basic

choice. That choice is to reject instruction in reading skills geared to an entire class or reading group and to strive to *reach* each one. Once such a decision has been made, it matters not what plan for meeting individual differences is adopted. The teacher may teach reading in two, three, or more small groups, or may work with individuals for a sizable part of the time devoted to reading instruction. He may give "slower" readers extra time to finish reading tasks. He may vary his expectancies of different learners.

In any case, varied opportunities for learning will be available simultaneously in the classroom, and the teacher will face a further choice. This time the choice is between slavery or freedom, for himself and the learners. If the teacher chooses to direct every child at every step of his learning, he will find himself impossibly busy as well as confused, and he will in the end fail to meet each individual at the point of need. Many a child will waste time doing a task inappropriate for him or waiting for a new task to be assigned. Most serious of all, the teacher will fail to develop self-direction in learning. If the teacher chooses to establish the expectancy and the skills of self-managed learning, he will have as many allies as there are individuals in his class. He will be busy but he will not be carrying the burden alone. Confusion may occur on occasion, but there will be available a process for resolving the difficulty. He can expect to make progress in developing students because the members of his

class are having chances to act like students.

Cooperative procedures often are thought of in connection with activities falling outside of regular subjects, or perhaps within subjects like social studies. However, there are many ways to use cooperative procedures within the reading program also. Let us explore some of these ways briefly.

*Time and timing.* In a self-contained classroom decisions have to be made as to the amount of time for reading and the placement of this time in the schedule. All sorts of possibilities exist. A time just for reading may be set aside with the expectancy that each learner will be occupied with some reading activity during the entire time or until he has finished certain tasks. A large block of "work" time may be created, during which individuals study or practice in different skill areas, allotting more or less time to each. Or, again, the whole day may be a time when individuals move in and out of reading as circumstances permit. Within any block of time made available for reading in a self-contained classroom or in a departmentalized program at either elementary school or secondary school level, decisions must be made as to distribution of time among the possible activities. For any time that the teacher is to be occupied in direct instruction with a small group or an individual, there is the problem of deciding what the rest of the class is to do with that time and how they are to proceed so that the teacher may be free to concentrate on the selected learner or learners.

When learners help to make some of the necessary decisions about time, they are likely to develop a better understanding of the purposes for which the time is being set aside and thus to cooperate more intelligently and wholeheartedly. They also are in a better position to plan use of their own time within the master schedule. Some teachers encourage learners to keep a plan book in which to enter plans for working on certain skills and plans for any time that may be left over. Such self-assignments, done under the supervision of an understanding teacher, are one step toward independence in learning. Elementary school teachers will find many ideas to share with children in *Independent Activities for Creative Learning*, by Darrow and Van Allen.\* News weeklies and magazines contain many suggestions for learners themselves to adopt.

**Materials.** What to read or what practice material to use is another important decision which can be shared with the prospective reader. Much has been written on that abused term, self-selection in reading. Few would hold the extreme position that each individual, no matter at what age or stage of development in reading, should *always* decide by himself what he will read, or that only trade books are respectable candidates for selection. A reasonable position is that the individual should

have considerable opportunity to choose what he will read from a wide selection of safely controlled books and materials covering wide ranges of interest and difficulty. However, the very act of learning how to make wise choices is a matter requiring the cooperation of a teacher and the individual concerned. In a classroom where cooperative procedures are familiar, learners help one another find "good things to read."

Assembling and managing a varied, challenging, and changing classroom library are problems requiring the cooperative planning and acting of the entire class, working with parents, librarians, other school authorities, and other classes. The library which young people create and maintain is a library that remains useful and attractive.

**Companions.** Reading is an individually developed skill but one that is used for communicating with unseen writers and for securing enjoyment or stimulation to be shared with others. While an individual is in the struggling stages of skill development, whether it be in first learning to read or in taking on the strange vocabulary of a new subject at the high school level, privacy in learning is welcomed. When an individual discovers an exciting new idea or meets a new question in his reading, he may seek companionship for interaction.

How unfair, how dreary, and how confining it would be to have all association with reading take place in a group of individuals with similar reading ability, working on a set agenda. An excellent use of coopera-

\*Helen Fisher Darrow and R. Van Allen, *Independent Activities for Creative Learning*, No. 21 in the Practical Suggestions for Teaching Series (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1961).

tive procedures is to share the decisions of who will read or share reading with whom.

In some elementary school classrooms children create a sign-up space on the chalk board, inviting interested parties to form an audience to hear a story they are prepared to read aloud. Children invited to do so could devise other plans for securing an audience, including going to other classrooms.

One first-grade teacher made it possible for her children to place themselves in a reading group. When the time came to create groups which would be handling material at different levels of difficulty, the teacher invited children to join any group they wished or to read with two or three different groups for as long as they needed to, until they found one where they wanted to stay. The teacher testified that the children did a remarkably good job in locating a group where they could make progress at a comfortable pace and she believed that the children felt good about themselves and the group they were in whether it was at the "top" or at the "bottom."

When a considerable amount of the reading instruction is individually managed, supplemented by special groupings created by the teacher for economy in working on a particular skill and by other groupings formed by learners for their own purposes related to reading, each individual can secure the privacy he needs at certain stages of learning and the number and kinds of companions he desires for different reasons. Here is

another opportunity to contribute to the making of a student.

*Help.* In any classroom the teacher faces the problem of providing help when it is needed in order to move ahead in reading. When this general problem is shared with learners, they can devise plans for helping one another, including training themselves in the best ways of teaching others. They can become intelligent about the use of helps like glossaries, dictionaries, and reference books. In some classrooms pupils make a habit of comparing definitions found in more than one dictionary.

Another kind of help comes when teachers encourage individuals to explain to others how they have figured out a particular new word or how they go about attacking unfamiliar words in general. In this case, as so often occurs when cooperative procedures in learning are used, the teacher learns extra things about young people in the process.

A teacher may also make the interpretation of a passage a cooperative affair by having different individuals read in a way to show the meaning the sentences have for each.

If learners are helped to develop a student's attitude toward their own process of learning to read, and if they work together to create conditions making it easier and more pleasant for each to advance in reading, much of the unhealthy competitiveness now associated with reading in some classrooms may be replaced with genuine pleasure at the growth shown by various classmates, whether

they are the best readers in the class or the least able.

*Evaluation.* No individual has become a self-propelled learner unless he can and will take responsibility for evaluating his own growth and production. In the case of reading, for reasons already stated, evaluation of individual performance should be as private as possible, kept in a teacher-pupil cooperative twosome. Individuals may gather data on their own effectiveness if they are helped to read such signs as interest of their audience as they read, response of others to points they make in discussion of reading, and meanings others find in the same material they have read. Group approaches to evaluation may well consist of discussing features that make oral reading pleasurable and intelligible for the audience, types of material that lend themselves to sharing, ways individuals may gather

evidence on their own growth in reading.

### Conclusion

In a country which depends on intelligent cooperation of its citizens to run its government, manage its economy, advance its knowledge, and provide for decent human relations, the development of extra skill in co-operation as a by-product of a reading program is quite to be desired. Since this extra dividend can accrue while teachers are helping more individuals to become lifelong students, is this not an educational bargain too good to miss?

*(Alice Miel is Head of the Department of Curriculum and Teaching at Teachers College, Columbia University. She is especially interested in creativity and teaching, and a book on this subject is scheduled for publication this fall.)*

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### Announcement

The National Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards of the National Education Association is seeking to determine the extent of possible interest in a placement-information type of service concerning openings in teacher education institutions and concerning the availability of personnel.

The proposal is to announce during 1961-62 through the columns of the *Journal of Teacher Education*, in a highly ethical and confidential manner, (1) openings in teacher-education institutions and (2) the availability of personnel for employment in teacher-education institutions. If you wish to learn more about the proposal please write to *Journal of Teacher Education*, NEA, 1201 - 16th Street, N.W., Washington 6, D.C., enclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

## Spurs to Reading Competence

by LAURA ZIRBES

INCREASING competence in reading can be fostered and developed, but it takes more than instruction and training. Competence requires more than specific habits and skills. It is not a mere matter of rate and comprehension as measured by tests, nor is it something to be gained by drill lessons or formal practice exercises. Increasing competence is rather a matter of measuring up to ever more challenging reading situations as they arise in the course of experience—a matter of intelligent initiative and effective self-direction in the uses of reading as a resource, wherever it serves a need or purpose in living and learning, wherever it contributes to the satisfactions, meanings, and values that vicarious experience extends.

Reading competence is much more than a composite of techniques. It is a creative process of adaptive situational adjustments to emergent cues, a continuing quest, in which successive steps are inferred from what went before and projected situationally, as promising ways ahead—as alternatives to be tried and evaluated in action.

Now, it must be clear from what has been said so far that "all this" is contingent on interactive situational guidance that is not only insightful and flexible, but *dynamic* in its challenges to individuals and groups. Such guidance must provide the impetus to high endeavor and full involvement. It must provide access

to suitable resources, and intrinsic incentives to inquiry and effort. Lessons and assignments are too didactic to suffice. No single text, no stereotyped procedure will serve as an adequate spur to the optimal level of involvement so characteristic of whole-hearted developmental learning.

The first spur is the challenge to "note," to inquire, to discover. Creative guidance sets conditions that are the spurs to active attention, inquiry or discovery—to finding *out*, finding *why*, or finding *how*. It seeks to *create* the questing concern, and provides it with conditions and resources that have promise of leading on, at whatever level.

Competence in *beginning* reading is spurred by the realization that what has been "said" orally can also be "said" in print; that reading not only recovers what has been said orally and said in print, but can also recover what has been done or experienced, or put into oral or visual language, or expressed pictorially or in action.

Some *group* experiences are spurs to types of reading which contribute richly to competence. To illustrate, the following bona fide instances are cited:

A sudden devastating spring flood became an absorbing topic of spontaneous discussion in a school assembly. Subsequently the kindergarten group played it out with large blocks on the floor. The first grade dramatized the rescue scenes described in radio reports and pictured in newspapers. An intermediate grade was so impressed by the discussion that it undertook a study of *Great Riv-*

ers of the World, and an upper grade projected a whole series of inquiries and reports on "Water — What Man Does With It, and What It Does to Man."

At a subsequent school assembly session several weeks later, these groups and others contributed in ways which illustrate how direct experience can become a real spur to increasing competence in reading. Children stopped to note titles of the flood pictures that had been posted in the school corridor by the upper primary groups. The lower intermediate class that had studied great rivers of the world presented several series of slides, each of which was about one of the world's great rivers — the Amazon, the Rhine, the Nile, the Ganges and the Mississippi. Panels of children interpreted the groups of slides, and exhibited the books which they had used as sources of information.

This program was a spur to several individual inquiries. The books, maps, travel folders, and copies of *National Geographic Magazine* that were used in these studies were assembled for an exhibit, during which each young exhibitor made a report and answered other children's questions. There were illustrations and reports on the following topics: Kinds of Bridges, Famous Bridges, Great Dams, Rapids and Waterfalls, River Stories. The story about log rafts led to the development of a study of the "History of Papermaking." This involved a great deal of purposeful selective reference reading as well as responsible proofreading in the preparation of a mimeographed class booklet to which individuals contributed.

In another school, an upper-grade report of a news item led to a discussion of colonialism. A boy said he wanted to read several versions of the history of Colonial America, one of which was written by a colonist. He said he was interested in what might be revealed by the differences be-

tween that account and others that were written at least a hundred years later. His interest was a spur to group thinking which led to the formulation of the following questions for study.

1. What evidences of Spanish exploration and colonization remain where American cities, mountains, or rivers have Spanish names?
2. What remains as evidence to indicate that other European nations had a part in colonizing America?
3. What were the issues which led the American colonists to fight the war for independence?
4. How is all this related to attitudes toward colonialism today?

It should be clear that satisfactory answers to such questions required competent reading, and that the experience of locating, selecting, and reporting pertinent information was a spur to increasing competence.

How different it would have been to read to answer ready-made questions succinctly stated on a blackboard or in a single required text, with a view to getting set for a recitation! It is interesting to consider how barren and uneducative this latter approach is, in comparison to the challenging spur to competent reading when inquiry itself is guided by a genuine data-gathering quest and a maturing concern for the location, selection, and cumulative consideration of pertinent information. The spurs to such reading are the dynamic factors which make for carry-over. The interactive consideration of findings is far more educative than the choice of alternatives in so-called "objective tests." The spurs to high scores on such tests should not be confused with spurs to broader, fuller competence in reading!

Effective teaching does much more than emphasize specific techniques, for it is a process contingent on creatively adaptive reading, fluid mind sets, judgments, and continuities of forward adjustment and needs. To develop competence, functional guidance and creatively adaptive interaction do what they can to foster fluid continuities of concern, flexibly responsible mind sets, judgments, and commitments. The quality of teaching at every level can be judged by its developmental consequences and effects. Hence instructional expectations which encourage dependence on direction, and which fail to provide the spurs to the self-reliant use of books, are to that extent responsible for incompetent reading.

Any teacher should realize that reading interests can be cultivated, that the school can provide contacts and experiences which give free access to the literary heritage with which today's children are blessed, and with the types of life enrichment which juvenile literature offers. The actual spurs to intelligent selection and free reading can be identified by sensitive evaluation which takes account of more than comprehension and rate! Objective scores on tests and diagnostic data on remedial needs can be personalized and supplemented to foster maturing experiences in self-direction, resourcefulness in the location and purposeful use of reference materials, competence in the interpretation and organization of findings, and in their creative use.

All of this assumes a considerable measure of insightful concern for

reading competence on the part of teachers, librarians, and parents, but that can be developed and fostered by responsible democratic leadership.

A competent reader carries on a continuity of activities like the following, without needing or wanting direction. An experience or a comment may start the process. An example follows:

Someone referred to paper being manufactured from rags. The teacher was ready with several possible comments from which she selected one or two to try out as "starters." She said: "I thought some paper was made from wood." . . . "Is *all* paper made from rags?" . . . "Manufactured means made. Paper is *made* from rags." She asked, "Where did you get that information?" . . . "How did you come to know that?" She said, "Perhaps we could make paper." . . . "I wonder where the people who make paper get enough rags?" . . . "It would be interesting to know *how* paper is made." The teacher's comments started conversation. She listened and entered in without shutting others out. Talk went on for a few minutes, most of it relevant, but some of it clearly irrelevant. Instead of referring critically to the irrelevance of some suggestions, the teacher picked up leads to further group discussion, and worked toward fuller participation. One child asked, "Where do you suppose we could go to see paper being made?" Another child said, "May-be we could find out how it is done and make some paper ourselves."

One measure of the reading competence of that group was the intelligent self-directed use of several reference books to locate information on paper-making, but the *spur* to that activity was the prospect of making paper and the need for the information.

The next day the children's reports on what they had found in reference books were used as the basis for planning. The steps were set down and referred to as plans progressed. Paper was made and used for Mother's Day greetings. There was zest and zeal in the whole process.

Children's interests can be a spur to wide and extensive reading and the very amount of it contributes to

fluency. The cumulative impact of vicarious experience in pictures and print not only aids imagery, but provides cues to word recognition and spurs to the concern for meaning.

Any teacher should recognize the signs that reading is being freely used as a resource for finding out. Any teacher should realize that children's questions can be useful as spurs to fuller involvement. Once the process of inquiry is under way, guidance can provide reading resources, encouragement and interaction to foster and sustain it. No stereotyped routine or lesson plan will do what needs to be done to develop the initiative and judgment that carries individuals and groups along on the way to increasingly self-reliant competence in reading. Nothing short of that is needed for ever more effective independent study on successive levels of personal, educational, and social maturity.

Directive assignments may "cover the ground," but guidance which concerns itself with the optimal fulfillment of every pupil's potential competence sets itself to proceed developmentally.

The school should not do less than launch every child on a lifelong, life-related, life-wide course, as a fully literate, competent user of reading. Suppose, instead, that the school settles for less, limiting its curricular concerns in reading to required material covered, to stereotyped lessons from required texts, to formal training in reading habits and study skills. Would that suffice to ensure reading competence? No more formal instruction in oral or written language would

suffice for the free and effective uses of language in communication—much less for the flowering of the language arts in literary appreciation and expression.

Now it remains to make very explicit—perhaps by contrast, and by recourse to illustrations—just how teaching which provides spurs to reading competence differs from low-level pedantic instruction, which dulls the edge of learning, and disregards the developmental potentialities of reading competence as the key to ever more literate living.

Whereas a directive assignment expects compliance, it is not as conducive to the development of competence as one which is a challenge to self-reliant situational judgments, projected into purposive courses of action.

Reading can be experienced as a quest in which self-directed next steps are considered, selected, initiated, projected, consummated and evaluated in a continuity of purposive action—a dynamic self-directed search for meanings, guided by an emergent sequence of inferences, insights, judgments and action projected, paced, and evaluated as inquiry.

Competence is developed by guided experience in this process. Well-conceived reading programs provide challenging experiences in which the satisfactions and responsibilities of independent study, as well as the potentialities of free access to generous and varied reading resources, are explored. Lives that are not enriched by reading not only miss the values of the literary heritage; they miss the

vicarious experiences which might provide enrichment and identification with current concerns and opportunities. Without competence those who have acquired reading and study skills are less likely to find satisfaction and challenge in books, less likely to be intelligently selective and mature in their interpretation of the "printed word," less judicious in their reactions to propaganda, less informed and less liberal in their outlook. These are values well worth considering and well worth fostering. They should serve as spurs to a fuller realization of the need for forward adjustments in the reading programs of today's schools. Those who for any reason counsel education to forego the implications of expanded reading resources and deepened insights into learning in favor of a narrow emphasis on required texts and directive instructional practices are regressive. Their counsel cannot be trusted for guidance on the way ahead.

Children who have access to several books about animals—or several books about homes around the world—or to a collection of references related to any challenging problem, are likelier far to read more and to read more intelligently, more competently, than those who are limited to turn-taking in a prescribed reading text.

Browsing which culminates in selection and then develops into the thoughtful preliminary perusal of a particular book as an orientation to actual reading is a developmental engagement. It not only leads to self-directive commitment, but to active adaptation of pace and procedure to

whatever serves to engage the reader's purposes, and it instigates coordinated visual and mental processes that are sufficiently satisfying to favor further reading. Persistence in the responsiveness to such opportunities develops competence in extensive reading. Teachers can widen the array of reading materials, and guide by cultivating interest and by interacting to foster values which contribute to dynamic attitudes.

Children can learn to *care* about good books by having the advantage of satisfying opportunities for selection and free use.

The teacher whose guidance does not foster competence may find it easier and more congenial to follow mass methods, requiring conformity and discouraging initiative. But conformity to directive mass management is not conducive to the reading competence toward which developing individuals should be headed on their way to maturity. Whatever his level, the student who expects to be told exactly what to read and what to do with what he is "required to read," has been seriously retarded and diverted from the way to reading competence. It should go without saying that the reorientation of such students is every teacher's responsibility.

*(Laura Zirbes is well known for her contributions to the improvement of reading through the years. She is an Emeritus Professor of Education at Ohio State University and author of *Spurs to Creative Reading*, which was reviewed in a recent issue of this journal.)*

## Reinforcing Reading Skills Through Workbooks

by MILLARD H. BLACK AND LAVON HARPER WHITEHOUSE

**A**N EXPERIMENTAL STUDY of the effectiveness of reading follow-up materials for grades one to six was conducted by the Elementary Section of the Curriculum Branch, Division of Instructional Services, Los Angeles City Schools, during the school years 1957-1959. Following the use of workbooks in grades two and three during the year 1960-61, a survey was conducted to determine the opinions of teachers, administrators, and supervisors as to the values to be derived from their use. Some of the results of these studies are discussed in this article.

For more than twenty years persons engaged in the teaching of reading have argued both for and against the use of workbooks as a part of the instructional materials of the program. Burton states that while there are many criticisms of reading workbooks, most of the criticisms are aimed at their misuse, rather than at the content of the workbook itself.\* Tinker points out that they may make an important contribution in the development and maintenance of many of the reading skills.† He also points out the dangers of their misuse: their degeneration into mere busywork, the development of bad habits through lack of supervision,

and inadequate training of pupils in the proper use of workbooks.

Related research reviewed in connection with the 1957-1959 study indicated that the values of workbooks in the reading program have not been adequately defined.

Prior to the initiation of this study, one of the elementary teachers' organizations had conducted a survey to determine, among other things, the desire of teachers for "follow-up" materials in reading. The conclusions drawn from this survey indicated that about 80 per cent of the teachers believed that teacher-prepared reading follow-up materials were inadequate, and that workbook-type materials designed to accompany the reader series being used for instruction should be provided.

The report prepared by the organization assumed that at least two benefits would derive from the use of reading workbooks: "(1) The increased time available for teacher-planning for enrichment and extension of class experiences, and (2) the probability of improvement of reading instruction through use of follow-up materials prepared by experts."

The Los Angeles study was designed to obtain answers to the following questions:

*A. What is the comparative effectiveness of the workbook method of follow-up activity as compared to the*

\*William H. Burton, *Reading in Child Development* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1956).

†Miles A. Tinker, *Teaching Elementary Reading* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1952).

non-workbook method of follow-up activity as evaluated by: (1) Analysis of experimental evidence gathered from pre-test and post-test scores involving groups of workbook and non-workbook classes? (2) Opinions of professional personnel as to the effectiveness of workbook and non-workbook methods of instruction? (3) Evaluation of the materials involved in the two methods by professional personnel?

*B.* How widely are workbooks used in the instructional program of: (1) City school districts in the United States with a population of 100,000 or over? (2) Selected school districts in the State of California?

*C.* What are the relative amounts of teacher time involved in lesson preparation under the workbook and non-workbook methods?

*D.* What is the comparative cost of the workbook method in relation to the non-workbook method of follow-up activity?

A four-part study was indicated by the problems selected. The first of these, the determination of the effectiveness of the workbook and non-workbook materials, was divided into two parts: (1) a learning experiment with thirty-six matched classes, and (2) professional opinion of the relative effectiveness of workbook and non-workbook procedures. This involved the use of reading workbooks in an additional twelve hundred classrooms.

A city-wide committee composed of teachers, administrators, academic operational supervisors, curriculum supervisors, and representatives from

professional organizations was appointed to assist with this study. Primary responsibility for the study was delegated to the Coordinator of the Elementary Curriculum, and a full-time consultant was made available to assist the chairman in the actual conduct of the study.

### **The Learning Experiment**

Measurement of pupil growth in reading ability was made possible through pre-test procedures with thirty-six mathematically matched classes in eighteen randomly selected elementary schools. A total population of 867 was used, thus affording adequate opportunity to measure the relative growth in reading skills between experimental and control groups at specific grade levels. The reading skills measured were the comprehension and vocabulary skills as defined by the Stanford Achievement Test (Reading).

At the first-grade level, pupils using only teacher-made materials had a significantly higher gain in reading skill than those using commercially prepared workbooks.

At the second-grade level, a difference significant at the 5 per cent level of confidence was observed between the experimental (workbook) and control (non-workbook) groups on comprehension score. A difference significant at the 1 per cent level was evident in the results of the vocabulary test.

In grade three, as in grade two, the larger gains made by the workbook group in comprehension and vocabulary development were significant

at the 5 per cent and the 1 per cent levels of confidence, respectively.

In grade four, the growth made by the workbook group in comprehension was again significant at the 5 per cent level. Although the difference between the two groups in the vocabulary part of the test approached the 5 per cent level of confidence, it was not quite large enough to satisfy this requirement.

At the fifth-grade level, the total results did not demonstrate superior achievement by either group.

The total results of the sixth-grade experiment indicated a gain in reading comprehension favoring the experimental group, although the differences were not great enough to warrant a statement of clear superiority. Differences between the experimental and control groups in vocabulary development could be attributed to chance.

#### **Effectiveness of Workbook and Non-Workbook Materials**

Teachers and administrators involved in the study were questioned about the time involved in lesson preparation and use of workbook follow-up lessons, about the ease of pupil performance on workbook exercises, and the preparation of materials in addition to the workbook. They were also asked to make a direct statement of preference between the two types of materials.

The following conclusions were drawn from nine hundred replies: (1) less teacher time was required for the preparation of lessons when a workbook was used; (2) pupils were

able generally to complete workbook assignments after normal instruction; (3) teachers at all grade levels prepared supplementary follow-up materials; and (4) teachers, administrators, and supervisors favored workbook material over the non-workbook type.

#### **Evaluation of Workbooks**

The city-wide committee developed criteria for the evaluation of workbooks and these were paralleled by similar criteria for the evaluation of teacher-made follow-up activities. The sub-items of the workbook criteria were:

1. Is the content suited to a balanced program of instruction to develop: (a) comprehension skills, (b) word recognition skills, (c) vocabulary building skills, (d) location skills, and (e) organization skills?
2. Does the vocabulary of the workbook help to develop the vocabulary of the corresponding reader?
3. Is the sequential development of specific skills related to that of the corresponding reader?
4. Does the workbook strengthen a skill previously introduced?
5. Is the workbook at the child's independent reading level, except as it provides for instructional matter introduced in the related lesson?
6. Is the purpose of each activity made clear to the teacher?
7. Is the purpose of each activity made clear to the pupil?
8. Can the directions be easily understood by the pupil after teacher explanation?

9. Is provision made for extension of growth in desirable attitudes and appreciations?
10. Is each new type of procedure introduced by an example suitable for the child?
11. Can the work be easily and quickly checked by the child and/or the teacher?
12. Are the illustrations: (a) purposeful, (b) appropriate to the grade level, and (c) attractive?
13. Does the workbook have "child appeal" in that it: (a) arouses pleasant associations and stimulates the imagination, and (b) has an attractive cover design?
14. Does the workbook meet established mechanical standards appropriate to the grade level in regard to: (a) adequate space for pupil response, (b) spacing between the lines, (c) sizes of type, and (d) width of margins?

Evaluation forms were sent to the six hundred "workbook" teachers participating in the opinion and evaluation study and to the eighteen "workbook" teachers in the learning experiment. The workbooks were also evaluated by a jury selected from the city-wide committee. The following paragraphs summarize the evaluation of the content of the workbooks included in the study:

"A general pattern is evident from the reader-level evaluation of the workbooks. The first-reader-level workbooks received a mean rating of 862.30 of a possible 1,000, less than 140 points below the maximum. This was the lowest mean rating received by any group. The second-level work-

books received the highest rating of the group; and, from that point, a gradual reduction was evident. At the sixth grade, the evaluation of the workbooks approached that of the first grade.

"Greatest satisfaction was reported in vocabulary and skill relationship, the program of vocabulary building and comprehension, and general format.

"Dissatisfaction was expressed regarding location and organization skills (first criterion) and in the communication of purpose and direction to the pupil (seventh and eighth criteria).

"The ratings of the workbooks by the participating teachers was high, with two exceptions. It appeared that the teachers believed that the great proportion of the workbooks satisfactorily met the requirements of the criteria. The jury ratings of the same workbooks followed a pattern comparable to the teacher rating."

More than two hundred sets of teacher-prepared follow-up materials were contributed by teachers not using workbooks; these were then evaluated against criteria designed to be directly comparable to the workbook criteria. The mean rating of these materials was only slightly greater than half the number of points possible and substantially below the mean rating of the workbook materials.

#### National Survey

The second major question proposed in this research regarding the use of workbooks as a part of the

reading program was that of their use (1) in major cities throughout the United States, and (2) in selected school districts in California.

A questionnaire was mailed in the winter of 1957 to school districts in cities of more than 100,000 population and to the twenty-four largest school districts in California. There were responses from 90 per cent of ninety-nine major school districts throughout the country and from 100 per cent of the selected California school districts.

Results of the survey indicated that reading workbooks were used in nearly three-fourths of the large school districts throughout the nation, and in 100 per cent of the districts surveyed in California.

General assumption of the effectiveness of workbooks as a means of strengthening basic skills was indicated by the returns from the survey. However, the general practice of supplementing workbooks with other materials was also evidenced.

A sizeable majority of the school districts using workbooks, approximately 60 per cent, used them at all grade levels. Where use was limited by grade level, only 11 per cent of the districts used workbooks in grades five and six.

In California, 67 per cent of the districts using workbooks reported their use at all grade levels. The remaining 33 per cent limited workbook use to the first three grades.

Parental reaction to the use of workbooks was reported to be generally favorable.

More than 90 per cent of the dis-

tricts responding to the questionnaire reported that workbooks had been used for more than two years.

### Cost Analysis

The third and fourth major questions related to the cost of a reading follow-up program, both workbook and non-workbook.

A cost analysis form was devised to obtain information in the following categories: (1) teacher time in preparation of lesson and follow-up materials, (2) supplies and materials involved in the reading program, (3) method of follow-up presentation, and (4) the use of the duplicating machine. A sampling of teachers in both the workbook and non-workbook studies were asked to report the amount of time and the number of items expended in the reading program over ten consecutive teaching days.

The summary of the analysis is quoted from the Los Angeles study:

*"The cost analysis of the workbook and non-workbook reading programs showed that expenditures of teacher time and of materials were greater for the non-workbook program.*

*"Teachers of the non-workbook program were required to spend approximately twenty minutes a day more than teachers of the workbook program in preparation and construction of follow-up materials.*

*"The per pupil cost of paper of all types for the non-workbook program was slightly less than fifty cents per year. The cost of the workbook program was slightly in excess of \$1.20 per pupil per year."*

### Workbook Program 1960-61

In September, 1960 reading workbooks were made available to the approximately 2,400 teachers of grades two and three. The following conclusions were reached from responses to a questionnaire sent to teachers, administrators, and supervisors: (1) In grade two, workbooks were of greatest use with the high reading group. (2) In grade three, the middle and high groups used them satisfactorily, while only about one-half the low group was successful in their use. (3) Teachers, administrators, and supervisors were generally agreed that pupil growth in reading and a saving of teacher time resulted from the use of workbooks.

### Summary

In this controlled learning experiment, pupils in grade one who used only teacher-prepared follow-up materials had a significantly higher gain than did those using commercially prepared workbooks. Pupils in grades two, three, and four who used reading workbooks made greater growth in reading than did pupils who did not use workbooks. No statistically significant differences were observed in grades five and six.

Teachers and administrators who evaluated workbooks believed the great proportion of them to be satis-

factory and favored their use.

A nation-wide survey indicated that workbooks were used to some extent in nearly three-fourths of the large school districts throughout the United States.

Teachers spent an average of about twenty minutes per day less in the preparation of reading lessons when workbooks were used than when only teacher-prepared follow-up activities were employed.

The cost of supplying workbooks for a reading program was found to be about two and one-half times greater than the cost of materials for teacher-prepared follow-up exercises.

Administrators, supervisors, and teachers of grades two and three were generally agreed, after using them, that workbooks reinforced skills and were a valuable part of the reading program.

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The Editor is pleased to report that beginning with this issue articles in **THE READING TEACHER** will be indexed in the *Educational Index*.

## A Cluster of Skills: Especially for Junior High School

by ALAN ROBINSON

THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL is somewhat of a twilight zone as far as sequence of reading skills is concerned. There is little certainty, especially in considering study skills, about where to begin and where to go—developmentally speaking. Possibly such a predicament is valuable and healthy, for the junior high school teacher must then evaluate individual pupils in terms of specific weaknesses and strengths.

Unfortunately, though, even if the junior high school teacher is able to ascertain such weaknesses and strengths, he often does not know how to proceed to capitalize on the strengths and to overcome the weaknesses. If he is a fairly typical teacher, he has not had a single course in the teaching of reading during his days as an undergraduate. One of the recommendations growing out of the recent Harvard-Carnegie study is that "a course in basic reading instruction be required of *all* prospective secondary school teachers."\*

The junior high school teacher can probably get more help, and in turn be able to give more, if study skills are considered in clusters of small units. The conventional attempts to plot full sequences of skills presents too many concepts at once for the teacher and the student. For exam-

ple, an "outlining cluster" might include only the following subskills in a rational sequence: reading for details, finding main ideas, changing main ideas to topics, supporting the topics with subtopics and details, labeling with outline form.

There might be individual clusters of skills necessary, however, for complete understanding of some of the subskills mentioned above. For instance, the writer of this article realized that junior high school students had difficulty in finding main ideas or key thoughts in paragraphs. At the time he was a consultant in a junior high school and, with the help of other members of the staff, a "key thought cluster" was devised. The purpose of this article is to present that cluster.†

The cluster grew out of the belief that students should not be asked to find the main idea before getting a great deal of practice in learning how to read for details. It is the writer's conviction that poor and generalized comprehension is fostered by the introduction of the main idea concept too early in the learning process. The ability to recognize and formulate main ideas calls for a great deal of reading and thinking maturity. In the final analysis, in order to deal with main ideas or key thoughts, a

\*Mary C. Austin and others, *The Torch Lighters* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961). Pp. 191.

†Much of this material has been taken from an address delivered by the writer at the University of Chicago Reading Conference, June 30, 1961.

student must be able to recognize important or key words in sentences, understand basic organizational patterns of written material, draw conclusions, and make inferences.

#### **Step One: Key Words in a Sentence**

Hovious' technique of sending a telegram is used to establish the concept of key words as the most important words.\* Students quickly observe that "Arrive International Airport New York nine Wednesday evening" states the most important words in the sentence, "I shall arrive at the International Airport in New York City at nine o'clock on Wednesday evening." They also learn that, for the most part, the same essential words will be chosen by different persons, but experience may cause some people to choose fewer or more words than others. The person who knows New York City or lives there might only need "Arrive International nine Wednesday evening."

Students should then move on to underlining the key words in sentences taken from conversation. A typical sentence might be, "Please be very careful that you do not damage the brand-new desks." Essentially students will underline "do not damage" or "not damage" "new desks." Once proficiency is established at this level, and students are beginning to realize that they are finding the main ideas of sentences, much more practice should be initiated using sentences from content-area materials.

\*Carol Hovious, *Flying the Printways* (Boston: D. C. Heath, 1938), p. 163.

Some students who find it difficult to let go of details may need the individual attention of the teacher for a while. Other students may be given more complex sentences to figure out. During this step, however, all sentences should be isolated and not presented as parts of paragraphs.

#### **Step Two: Key Sentence in a Paragraph**

In this step the students first learn that they need be concerned with fewer key words when sentences are treated together in paragraph form. They learn this through the experience of underlining key words in the sentences of short paragraphs. For example:

A school performs many services for the residents of a community. It offers instructional services for school-age children during the day and, often, courses for adults in the evening. It provides a meeting place for community organizations. It also serves as an active cultural center, for plays, concerts, and lectures are often scheduled.

In this paragraph the sentences are so closely linked that it is not necessary to keep repeating the subject. Students soon realize that they are primarily concerned with verbs and their objects once the subject is established.

The paragraphs presented in this step should be well structured, containing definite key sentences mainly as first and last sentences. One or two of the paragraphs may contain key sentences placed in other parts of the paragraph.

Students are asked to list the key ideas (groups of key words) they have found in the paragraph. For

example, this list might have been written about the paragraph on school services:

school performs many services  
offers instructional services  
provides meeting place  
serves as cultural center.

Students learn to *add up* the key ideas and decide whether or not one of them represents an over-all idea. It happens to be contained in the first sentence of the paragraph. Hence, in this paragraph, the over-all or main idea is contained in a key sentence at the beginning.

Here is another example. The task is a little more difficult because some of the sentences in the paragraph contain two key ideas. Students learn to treat these ideas as separate units in their search for the key sentence.

Everyone saluted as the flag was slowly raised. A smartly-dressed woman cracked a champagne bottle across the ship's prow and named it "Sea Hawk." The order was given, and the "Sea Hawk" started down the ways. A new ship was launched.

Everyone saluted + flag raised + woman cracked bottle across ship's prow + named it "Sea Hawk" + order given + started down ways = new ship launched. Obviously, the key sentence is the last sentence in the paragraph. Key idea + key idea + key idea = the over-all or main idea contained in the key sentence.

Look at this example:

Animals have interesting habits. One of the habits of some animals is to use nature's medicines when they are ill. Deer may eat twigs and the very tender bark of trees. Cats and dogs may eat grass when they are not feeling up to par. Bears often eat different kinds of roots and berries.

Deer eat twigs and tender bark + cats and dogs eat grass + bears eat

roots and berries = some animals use nature's medicine when ill. The first sentence in the paragraph serves only an introductory purpose. It may be introducing a series of paragraphs which will deal with interesting habits of animals. It is not, of course, the main idea of this particular paragraph. Hence, in this case, the key sentence is the second sentence in the paragraph.

### **Step Three: The Main Thought in a Paragraph**

After students have completed a great deal of successful practice in working with paragraphs containing key sentences in a variety of positions, they should be ready for this step. At this time they might be presented with a paragraph very much like this one:

We visited the seals frolicking in the water. Then we paid a visit to the colorful birds in the big new birdhouse. After that we stopped for a Coke and hot dog. Before going home we spent a lot of time watching the funny monkeys.

The students would again be asked to find key ideas. Visited seals + paid visit to birds + stopped for Coke and hot dog + before going home spent time watching monkeys = ? At this point numerous students will point out that there is no *stated* over-all idea.

Students must now make inferences, for the author does not state the key thought in a sentence of the paragraph. The student must look at all key ideas and determine the main idea of the paragraph himself. In this easy paragraph most students, of course, will agree that the key

thought is "we visit the zoo," or something similar.

When students have mastered the basic ideas in the three-step cluster of skills using carefully structured materials, normal textbook material should provide application and reinforcement. Students soon become aware of the fact that paragraphs which are parts of chapters in books don't always stand by themselves. One main or key thought may be carried through a number of paragraphs without repetition in each paragraph. Often students will decide on the key thought by noting part of a main idea stated by the author and adding to it through their own reasoning. For instance:

It is not only radio that has given them a great deal of help. Ballistics experts can tell whether or not a bullet was fired from a particular gun by examining the bullet under a microscope. Chemists help solve crimes by analyzing blood, dust, cloth, and other materials. Photographers, also, are used in helping police solve crimes. Often photographs, especially when enlarged, reveal clues that the human eye overlooked.

Obviously, in the paragraph above, the key thought is concerned with "people and things that help police

solve crimes." Clues can be found in the paragraph, but the reader can also arrive at the key thought through reasoning and the context that preceded this paragraph. Certainly a preceding paragraph, or several, dealt with "radio as it helps police solve crimes."

As students learn to look for organizational patterns in the way material is written, they will gain in ability to comprehend and retain. The teacher can best help the student by "clustering" closely related skills together in a teaching unit and by organizing the steps in a given cluster so well that the student has a series of successful experiences. *Challenge* is of tremendous importance after students feel that they have mastered the skill or skills to some degree. For even with the teacher's help in dealing with "clusters of skills," junior high school textbooks will present many challenges.

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## Study Skills for Superior Students in Secondary School

by F. P. ROBINSON

**R**EADING INSTRUCTION is a regular part of most college programs (4, 8). It deals not only with remediation of reading disabilities but also with instruction in higher levels of reading skill needed for collegiate study. This article will emphasize the value of giving instruction in higher level reading skills to superior high school students, particularly those who may be taking collegiate courses early, or those who want to learn these reading skills in preparation for later college work. It is also obvious that these reading skills can be of value in doing high school work.

Because high schools give much emphasis to remedial work for poor readers and because superior students read so much better than their peers, it is usually difficult to interest these students in learning better reading skills. However, the fact that these higher level skills are needed in college, and are a part there of the regular instructional program, should increase interest of superior students in maximizing their reading skills. In addition, the use of instructional materials specifically written for the college level will help indicate that higher levels of skill are being emphasized rather than remediation.

It will be necessary to show students that their reading skills are actually quite inefficient. Some data obtained from outstanding students in college will be useful here. Studies of Phi Beta Kappa and other honor

roll candidates show that their rate of reading is typically little above that of other students and that they have quite inefficient study skills (6, 13). Other studies show that superior students given selections with headings in and headings omitted read the former no faster nor comprehend them any better, although evidence indicates that such headings can with training be used to increase speed and comprehension (16). A study made during World War II of superior college students referred for specialized training showed that these students had been making their *A*'s and *B*'s more by strength of intellect than by efficient study skills (14). When these students were asked to read and take notes their "work rate" was only ninety-three words per minute, and the quality of their notes was little better than average.

Other studies show that with a single reading the typical reader gets only about 60 per cent of the ideas asked on an immediate quiz, and with immediate rereadings is able to raise his comprehension score only to about 65 per cent (7). Another study of several thousand high school students showed that there is rapid forgetting after reading: within two weeks after an initial reading only 20 per cent is remembered of what was known immediately after reading (17).

In brief, the average and superior student in high school and college is inefficient in his reading and study

skills; he tends to excell other students in grades mostly because of differences in intellectual ability and not because of better reading and study methods.

Before turning to the nature of some of these higher level reading skills and how they may be taught, two preliminary points need to be made: (a) textbooks should be even better organized to facilitate learning and (b) when students are given better books they will not do much better unless they are taught the necessary reading skills to use the facilitative cues. While modern textbooks are written in many ways to facilitate learning, e.g., use of headings, final summaries, illustrations, etc., there is good evidence that school textbook writers and publishers are still too much bound to the typographical style of ancient papyrus times, e.g., close printed, full line paragraphs in one type size. School textbooks make little use (except in footnotes) of paragraphs printed in different type sizes to indicate degree of importance. They do not use a style (found useful in governmental and industrial publications) of indenting the whole left side of subordinate paragraphs. Academic authors seem unprepared to use pictorial material as the main form of presentation, with prose added as explanation. Few help the reader by starting chapters with summary statements or by putting their headings into question form, etc. A great deal is known that could improve textbooks, and experiments such as trying the scramble order of the

recent *Tutortexts* should be encouraged and evaluated.

The second preliminary point is that superior students may not be able to read better when they are given well organized and facilitative material *unless they are given special instruction*. Earlier it was stated that inserting headings into a text does not increase reading speed or comprehension of college students. A more extensive study by Christiansen and Stordahl showed similar results and found in addition that adding such cues as underlinings, summary statements, etc., does not help un instructed adult readers (5). Another study by Newman showed that when material is prepared which forces students to read in a manner which seems to better fit psychological knowledge of how learning takes place, the students actually do better using their own self-derived methods with which they are comfortable (12). Additional studies show that simple explanations of better techniques (either through reading about them or through oral explanation) are not sufficient to bring about better skill (2, 18). However, with supervised practice, as is necessary in learning any skill, there is a definite gain in skill to levels far beyond those attained with self-help methods (2). In brief, what has been discovered in developing optimum athletic and industrial skills applies to learning scholastic skills as well. Research can be used to design new higher levels of skill, and these must be taught in a coaching and practice situation.

What are some of the higher level

reading and study skills? One of them is the SQ3R method—a technique devised from research findings for use in studying college textbooks (15). Some of the research will be summarized and the method then described. McClusky divided 118 college students into two equated groups; one group was shown how to skim over headings and summaries and the other was not shown. When these two groups were then given a selection to read, the trained group read 24 per cent faster than, and just as accurately as, the control group (11). Holmes also set up two large equated groups of college students and had them read selections about science and history (9). One group was given twenty questions *before* reading. As might be expected, the group given the questions did better in answering them, but they also did as well or better on additional questions. The advantage was particularly great on tests given two weeks after reading. Still another study by Washburne indicates the best placement for such questions (19). In this study 1,456 high school students were divided into several groups of equal ability. Questions were given to the different groups as follows: at the beginning of reading, at the end of reading, each question just before the material answering it, each question just after the material answering it, and no questions. The test contained questions already provided as well as other questions. Of these different placements two proved most effective: all questions at the beginning of the reading and each ques-

tion just before it was answered in the material.

These findings, plus the fact that textbook writers regularly use headings, numberings and summaries, provide a basis for designing the first three steps of the SQ3R methods: (1) *survey*, (2) ask a *question* before reading a section, and (3) *read* to answer that question. The reader is taught to quickly survey the headings and read the summaries before he starts to read the text. This gives him an orientation as to what the chapter will present, helps him recall what he already knows about these topics, and facilitates his subsequent readings.

We have already noted that students tend to forget much of what they learn from reading within a very short time, e.g., 80 per cent within two weeks (17). This same study also showed that a testing-type review immediately after reading was very helpful in reducing forgetting, e.g., instead of 80 per cent there was only a 20 per cent loss. Other studies show that readers often do not clearly comprehend ideas as they read along, and the rapid succession of ideas in reading tends to interfere with what is comprehended because of retroactive inhibition. So there is need for a system to check on comprehension while reading and also to help in fixing ideas better in memory. Note-taking can be used for this purpose, but the manner in which most students take notes is of little help. That is, studies show that students do as well with straight reading as they do with trying to read and take notes (1, 18). One reason for this is that

students tend to copy down phrases as soon as they find an important idea, and if the phrase is in italics they may write it down without understanding the point. Many students do not like to take notes because they write in complete sentences, which markedly slows down their reading speed.

Thus, a method must be worked out which helps the student check his comprehension as he reads, helps fix the ideas in memory, does not take too long, and is useful for later review. The fourth and fifth steps of the SQ3R method are designed to take care of these needs: (4) after completing a headed section, *recite* by writing a brief phrase from memory, and (5) immediately after reading the whole lesson *review* it by looking over the notes taken and reciting on them from memory. Notes are not taken until *after* a headed section has been read. This enables the student to read to answer his question (step 3) and then check on his comprehension and help fix the material in memory by reciting a brief answer. Waiting until the end of the section means that all of the ideas in that section can be seen in relation to each other and the most important selected; writing the note from memory means that the student has to organize his answer, and if he has trouble he can recall the material as needed; using phrases means that much time is saved in writing, and these cues will be sufficient later on for reminders in review.

The SQ3R method then consists of five steps: (1) *Survey* the headings

and summaries quickly to get the general ideas which will be developed in the assignment, (2) turn the first heading into a *Question*, (3) *Read* the whole section through to answer that question, (4) at the end of the headed section stop to *Recite* from memory on the question and jot the answer down in phrases (Steps 2, 3 and 4 are repeated on each succeeding headed section), and (5) at the end of reading the assignment in this manner then immediately *Review* the lesson to organize the ideas and recite on the various points to fix them in mind. This higher-level study skill cannot be learned simply by reading about it, it must be practiced under supervision just as with learning any skill. Modifications of this skill have also been worked out for studying collateral readings, English literature, and charts and tables (15).

While particular attention has been given to the explanation of one particular higher-level study skill, there are many other specialized skills which the superior secondary school student needs in college as well as in high school. Much use is made of specialized graphs, charts, maps, dictionaries, encyclopedias, resource books, etc., in college. A surprising number of college students tend to skip graphs and tables, refuse to use dictionaries and indices, or handle such material in an inefficient manner. Studies of college students' ability to use the library to find assigned books or to use easy short cuts in writing research papers show ignorance of fundamental and simple devices (10). Studies of the manner

in which college students go about reading examination questions show that rather than use systematic skills in analysis they usually use a self-taught "jump and guess" system (3). In brief, superior students in high school need to learn many higher-level skills if they are to be highly effective in college work.

Since students going to college move away from their usual surroundings and conditions for study, they also need help with study habits and planning. Irregular class schedules and the need for self-planning of study time leave many students floundering. Both the home and high school usually provide study conditions with a minimum of distraction, but in college there are many places to study, and students often try to combine studying with social possibilities. Finally, many students—even superior ones—go through high school with only vaguely understood adult goals, and go on to college mostly because "everyone in school does." Such motivation is insufficient to help students direct study efforts when so many more fascinating things are possible in college. Youngsters need help in thinking about why they want to go to college so that their college efforts can be more effectively self directed.

Our points, in brief, have been: Superior students in high school are typically inefficient in study methods; they have kept ahead of others through brilliance of intellect. College work will offer them particular difficulties because of greater demands and competition and because of many

distractions for poorly controlled individuals. Furthermore, superior students are interested in making outstanding records of achievement and discovery and not simply in excelling others; this demands that they learn research-designed higher-level study skills.

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## Problems of Concentration Among College Students

by J. WESLEY SCHNEYER

DIFFICULTY IN concentrating on required reading and study assignments is one of the most frequently expressed reasons for seeking help in a college reading clinic (1). This problem is usually verbalized by the students in such forms as: "My mind wanders when I read," or "After I have read two or three pages, I find that I've been thinking of other things, and don't remember what I've been reading."

As part of a larger investigation (2, 3) concerned with factors associated with the progress of students in a college reading improvement program, students were asked to indicate the reading or study problems which they felt the greatest urgency to improve.

The Problem Checklist contained seven items describing such typical reading-study difficulties as: lack of reading speed, inability to discriminate between main ideas and irrelevant details, panic during examinations, and lack of concentration. Each student was asked to rank the five problems he felt most crucial to his academic success and which presented him with the greatest difficulty.

The 71 students who were enrolled in the Reading and Study Skills Program at the University of Pennsylvania Reading Clinic during the 1958-59 academic year were the subjects of the investigation. Based on changes from pre- and post-administrations of total reading scores ob-

tained in the *Cooperative English Test C2: Reading Comprehension*, the subjects were divided into three groups: 21 High Improvers, 29 Average Improvers, and 21 Low Improvers.

The three groups were then compared on each of several factors, including: scholastic aptitude, study habits and attitudes, personality factors, personal, social and educational factors, certain reading skills, and the previously mentioned reading and study Problem Checklist. The purpose of the present paper is to report and discuss the findings relative to the problem of concentration as indicated on the Problem Checklist.

An analysis of the data revealed that 28, or 39.4 per cent, of the 71 students enrolled in the Reading and Study Skills Program had indicated that concentration on their assignments was their most pressing reading-study problem. None of the other problems was considered as important by such a large proportion of students.

The question arises: why should such a large percentage of students consider this one problem out of the seven listed on the checklist as their most pressing difficulty?

From the personal interviews which were held with each student before and after the program and from observations made while students were reading and studying assignments, problems of poor concen-

tration appeared to fall into three categories.

### Anxiety and Tension

Inability to concentrate due to anxiety and tensions resulting from internal personal conflicts was often reported. Thorpe (4, p. 243) suggests the following as possible factors:

- (a) Choosing courses which are too difficult, the subsequent failure resulting in depression and symptoms of fatigue;
- (b) perfectionism leading to the development of headaches and abdominal pains; and
- (c) deep anxiety over the possibility of failure in course examinations, and a compulsive need to excel in homework and all class assignments which are not resolved.

Conferences with students indicated that such things as the illness of a near member of the family, financial difficulties of the student or his family, or problems involving educational or vocational decisions may reduce the student's power to concentrate on his academic work.

The Harvard University Health Service Report presented evidence that some students have difficulties because of a tremendous need for external support, sometimes developed because of a feeling that "... his parents are so concerned with their own problems that they have no emotion left over to be invested in their child's career. . ." Such a student may develop a "... feeling that he is working in a vacuum and his own interest in his studies tends to diminish" (5, p. 82).

Two other unconscious drives are suggested by the Harvard Report (5, pp. 84, 85) as sometimes associated with academic problems.

One of these is an unwillingness to be what someone else wants him to be and instead an insistence on individual performance and according to his own personal standards even if this means losing prestige in everyone's eyes except his own. The second drive is a rebellious one and represents a retaliation against parents who are unconsciously resented.

This rebellion is sometimes

... a means of striking out against parents toward whom they may feel, unconsciously, strongly resentful or antagonistic. Some students, who are unwilling to oppose their parents directly through arguments or disobedience, may find expression for their repressed rebellion through academic failure.

This latter type of rebellion frequently appears to be a kind of "self-sabotaging" by the student in retaliation for parental pressure to continue study in a field in which the student has no interest, but which the parent insists on.

In the case of students who were unable to concentrate on their studies because of emotional conflicts, referrals were made—either to the University Counseling Service or to the Student Mental Health Clinic of the University. Those students who seemed to be in greater need of specialized psychotherapy, and who were receptive to the idea of a referral direct to the psychiatrist, were referred to the Mental Health Clinic. Those students who had problems which they had trouble handling, but who seemed to be aware of their trouble, were referred to a member of the Counseling Service as an "intermediate therapist," who might later make the referral to the psychiatrist if this seemed warranted.

### Poor Study Skills

A second factor associated in this

study with some cases of poor concentration included deficiencies in various reading and study skills. Some students were unable to understand their textbooks because of failure to master basic skills of vocabulary, comprehension, and critical thinking. Failure to deal effectively with reading assignments often resulted in the development of tensions and anxieties that made concentration almost impossible.

One student reported in conference: "Sometimes I have a lot of trouble understanding what the book says. I don't know what some of the words mean, and I can't get the important ideas. I get all messed up between the main points and the details. I try to remember everything—and I can't. Then I start to panic—and I go blank. I read a couple of pages, and don't remember a thing. That's when my mind starts to wander."

In addition to an inadequate command of basic skills, some students lacked an active, purposeful reading-study approach to their assignments. Many students tended to read in the passive, unparticipating manner of a spectator. They were simply pronouncing the words and turning pages. When they came to a difficult passage, their only method of attack was simply to read and reread in the same passive manner. They had mastered no method for analyzing these troublesome passages.

The instructional program for these students included basic instruction in development and improvement of vocabulary and comprehen-

sion skills. Techniques for analyzing complex sentence structure and paragraph organization were included. An important part of the program was the "Mastery Technique" (6), which emphasized active reading through searching for answers to self-formulated questions, recitations, and note taking to aid retention. The use of this active method of reading and studying helped students to improve their ability to concentrate, because they provided themselves with specific purposes and goals for their studying, rather than an aimless meandering through the content.

### **Slow Reading Rate**

A third cause of inadequate concentration as observed by the investigator was the lack of sufficient reading speed. Many bright students with alert, active minds, read so slowly that they could not "feed" ideas and concepts into their minds at a rapid enough rate to prevent "wool gathering and mind wandering." Generally, these students were observed to have excellent vocabularies and more than adequate comprehension skills but to lack adequate reading rates.

These students were helped to increase their reading rates through the use of pacing devices and by developing previewing and skimming techniques for key words. As these students increased their reading rates and learned to read actively, with a questioning manner, they reported a great increase in their ability to concentrate on their studies.

*(The author is an Assistant Professor of Education at the University*

of Pennsylvania. He is Supervisor of the High School, College, and Adult Reading Clinic of the University.)

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## Instruction in Literature in Elementary School

by PAUL C. BURNS

THE PURPOSE of this article is to consider the literature program in the elementary school and its role in helping pupils build a permanent interest in and a taste for excellent reading material of a wide variety. Obviously, ways of presenting the material, means of arousing and maintaining interest in the program, and the selection of materials are parts of our concern.

The following activities and the references cited are suggestive; they are not intended as a comprehensive listing of possibilities.

### Ways of Presenting Literature

*Oral reading to the pupils by the teacher.* The atmosphere should be relaxed, with enjoyment as the primary goal rather than study. Some teachers seat pupils informally to contribute to a feeling of friendliness and naturalness. After all, reading for fun is a form of play rather than work. This is not to imply that the oral reading is not at times preceded by background information or followed by informal discussion of a proper nature. The point is that the background is not of an analytical approach and the questions have a purpose somewhat different from testing questions—to whet curiosity, catch the pupils' attention, develop meaning of words vital to interpretation, give purpose for listening.

*Oral reading to the class by individual children.* What teacher, for

example, can equal a child's performance in reading Eugene Fields' "Jest 'Fore Christmas"? Here the reader is the only child who has a copy of the material being read. Perhaps the pupil found a selection which he liked so well that he thought the rest of the class should hear it during a free reading period at school or a reading-for-pleasure time at home. With the help of the teacher, and class standards developed for more effective oral reading of literature, he has prepared it for a class reading.

*Free silent reading.* Now the children have opportunity to browse through various books and magazines in the classroom or library. The teacher takes the viewpoint that an individual ought to pretty largely run his own show, so to speak, insofar as literature and leisure time are concerned. This isn't to say that the school's job is to condition children to have their reading taste aligned with garbage pail type of literature. If it is true that many people read "trash," this doesn't mean it's to be recommended—it suggests there is a problem that wants attention.

*Class reading of a single selection.* In this situation all the children in the class read a given prose or poetry selection, which is followed by an informal discussion of reactions to the selection. Oral reading ordinarily is preceded by silent reading. The teacher avoids having one pupil read orally while the rest follow silently in

their books. The audience situation is encouraged.

Some schools have adopted so-called "literary readers" for this activity. Teachers realize that poetry in particular is apt to be somewhat neglected unless special effort is made to supplement sources for pupils and conscious attention is given to this area of literature. Teachers know the rewarding experience of seeing young faces light up in response to the beauty of rhythmic words. Children respond to poetry that seems to be about them or that seems to express their feelings about happenings in everyday lives. They discover truth communicated through sound as well as the meaning of words. Children often coin words of their own in which sound and meaning have relationship. Children who have had interesting and vivid experiences will likely want to express their reaction in some creative way as a group or on an individual basis. Pupils can learn to enjoy poetry unless teachers and others impose "barbed-wire entanglements" about it. Prying too deeply into reasons for liking a selection, or talking too much about it, or forgetting that appreciation is as much emotional as intellectual are practices not designed to encourage the child to read for himself.

As pupils find particular parts that they intensely enjoy, memorizing may be encouraged for enriching appreciation and for future enjoyment. While memorizing of the same selections by all pupils is not recommended, there may be general favorites that are memorized by the entire class. The

amount of memorizing will surely vary with individuals, but in an excellent school program probably all will learn some literary gems by memory.

*Choral speaking and reading.* The shyness and diffidence of pupils may be swept away by the power of the rhythm or the music of the spoken word. This activity often improves speech patterns and provides practice toward memorization. Effort is made to keep voices light and flexible; good articulation and clear enunciation are striven for; and an overall vital rendering is the goal (4, 10, 13).

#### **Arousing and Maintaining Interest**

Such activities carried out in the suggested manner do not succeed without considerable thought and planning on the part of the teacher. Pupil interest needs to be aroused and maintained. In many classrooms a table in the reading corner displays new books and magazines and perhaps some story records. The bulletin boards display jackets of new books as well as original stories and poems of pupils, and possibly illustrations by pupils of favorite prose and poetry selections. There may be wall charts relating to themes of well-liked selections. Some children's book reviews may also be posted on the bulletin board.

Different boys and girls often give oral reviews of books they have read. Discussion of stories can add to understanding and enjoyment on the part of the reader and the listener. The reviewer may show his book and

may read aloud an interesting part. Other pupils are given an opportunity to make comments. Some guidance by the teacher is indicated at times, such as "Some of you have some unusual pictures in your books you might want to share with the group," or "If you have read something that our class has experienced recently, would you tell us about it?" Too, teachers often find it necessary to say something of this sort: "Since all of us can't tell of his reading to the entire class, let's jot down some points that will help us remember our story." Some such written reports may be posted on the bulletin board for other pupils' information. Other book reviews may be written for the reference file maintained for the use of other pupils.

Dramatizing literature may be done with puppets or with plays by pupils. Pupils often plan any simple costumes and stage settings deemed of real importance. The pupils' expression of the story is encouraged under the guidance of the teacher. No particular attempt is made to produce a polished drama, even though parents and others may be invited to see the production. Evaluation of the efforts may follow the dramatization.

Experiences may be provided involving the radio, phonograph, television, and films. If children are to listen to a recording of a poet saying one of his poems, some background about the author and the selection may be needed if pupils are to enjoy the selection fully.

Literary programs may consist of

children's reciting of poems, dramatizations, quizzes about authors or quotations, and the like. In general these activities grow out of the day-by-day work of the class.

Some pupils have come to enjoy reading and writing stories about the people who write prose and poetry for children. Often the knowledge of the author's life helps bring to life the particular literary selection. Some teachers have found it profitable to read to pupils (possibly rewriting, depending upon the grade level) the biographical sketches found in the *Junior Book of Authors* (7) and other reference sources. For example, primary grade pupils undoubtedly enjoy *April's Kitten* even more by knowing of the influence of drawing and cats in the life of Clare Newberry.

All of this is to say that perhaps one of the most important jobs that the school has is to cause pupils to want to do the things they wouldn't have wanted to do if the school hadn't caused them to do them.

To supplement the motivational activities suggested, some teachers have found it helpful to have a definite and regularly scheduled recreational reading period—not to be confused with the free reading period, or the basal reading period, or the literature period. Some teachers have described the various parts of the recreational reading period as including an introduction, body, and conclusion.

In the introduction a good deal of guidance on the part of the teacher is evident. There are introductions of new books to the class, discussion of

books which the pupils are in the process of reading, discussion of authors or illustrators, and perhaps discussion on how to figure out unknown words. During the body of the period, which consumes most of the overall time, the teacher works with those who don't start "right off," helps pupils with unknown words, avoids interrupting those who are progressing successfully. During the concluding minutes of the period some sharing may be done. Many teachers find that one recreational reading per week is satisfactory in maintaining a high interest in reading, but at times more may be necessary.

Enjoyable experiences at school will soon prompt pupils—even at the first-grade level—to want to continue this reading-for-pleasure at home. It is important that the selection of proper books for leisure reading at home be made, for recreational reading should be a pleasant experience, and too much struggling would tend to discourage reading. In recreational reading the pupil should have material that he can read fluently, without too much interference from mechanical difficulties such as word recognition. Since pupils are encouraged to share their out-of-school reading with other members of their class, parents can often play a part by suggesting from time to time that the child's story would be a good one to tell the group; and, of course, the parent's interest in hearing the story read and told is very important. The school may contribute further by sending bulletins to parents concern-

ing the child's reading program—encouraging a home library, suggesting reading lists, and recommending specific ways the home can assist with the school's program. Fortunately there are helpful publications which give parents advice as to guidance of children's reading (8).

### Selection of Materials

Certainly a program that is aimed at encouraging reading of wide variety and range will need a good deal of appropriate reading material. Again, fortunately, many recreational materials are available for both primary and intermediate grades. Variety is called for since pupils are individuals and have a wide range of background and interests. The selections of prose and poetry should aim to appeal to worthy and immediate interests of pupils, should be fun in and of themselves, should be within the understanding of pupils, should possess some literary merit and content worth the effort of reading, and should be up-to-date.

To remain acquainted with the field of children's literature, teachers need to continue to read children's books, browse good anthologies of children's literature, be familiar with histories of juvenile literature, and keep consulting reviews and announcements of current books. Teachers are fortunate to have available such sources of help as *Children's Catalogue* (1), *Elementary English* (3), *Junior Libraries* (6), and *The Reading Teacher* (12). A good reference of high interest-low vocabulary reading materials may be helpful

also (5). Familiarity with a serviceable readability formula can be helpful in deciding difficulty of a book (2, 14, 16). To do a good job of book selection teachers need acquaintance with reading tastes, interests, and habits of children. There is considerable research data which should be consulted, and related psychological literature which describes the developing interests of children in the early years (9, 11, 15, 17). Where good children's libraries are available, teachers should work in closest cooperation with the librarian.

It should be unnecessary to add that the single best foundation upon which the teacher can build toward developing reading preferences and tastes is by showing his own interest and enthusiasm for reading. Emphasizing the close relation which exists between the teacher's readership and the child's progress, Doctor Frederick, Professor of English at Notre Dame for many years, once told a group of teachers, "You cannot be a better teacher of reading than you are a reader." In other words a teacher must buy his product himself in order to sell it convincingly. Developing reading interests and tastes is a complex task which must be based on the spirit of the whole instructional program. An important thing to keep in mind is that teachers can plan for the developing of reading interests and tastes as definitely as they can give a place to the development of the more mechanical aspects of reading.

(The author received his Ph.D. degree from the State University of Iowa. He is now an Assistant Pro-

fessor of Education at the University of Kansas.)

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## Teaching Machines and Reading Instruction

by EDWARD FRY

TEACHING MACHINES are a popular topic of discussion and sometimes experimentation for educators these days.\* Since reading is also a perennial subject which consumes a good deal of instructional time, it is inevitable that teaching machines and the subject matter of reading are being, and will be, put together.

For those readers who are unfamiliar with teaching machines, let us briefly explain them. A teaching machine is more a methodology than a piece of hardware. First, we will describe a few typical teaching machines. The student reads a question and then responds by writing the brief answer on a piece of tape exposed by the machine. He moves a lever which simultaneously exposes the answer to the question and covers his written answer with a sheet of glass. The student scores himself right or wrong and moves the lever which presents the next item. Each item is carefully sequenced so that the questions and bits of information are presented step by small step and lead the student toward the desired learning goal. The teacher can later examine the student's work, but the chief motivation is the immediate self-knowledge of progress.

Some machines present multiple choice items on cards. The student

responds by pressing a button corresponding to his answer choice. If the student presses the correct button a green light shows, and the student is allowed to progress to the next item. If the student presses the wrong button, nothing happens. He must keep working until he makes the correct choice. The machine may count errors made.

One type of teaching machine is a device called a scrambled book, which presents at the top of the page a bit of new information which is followed by a multiple choice question. The student responds to the question by turning to a different page, the number of which is alongside his answer choice. When the student responds to his answer choice page he is told: "Right, now you are ready for the next step, etc.," or "Wrong, apparently you don't understand that—now turn back to the first page and try again." Thus the book may act like a tutor, supplying specific remedial information based on the type of error.

Other teaching machines might use digital computers with a typewriter input, which can supply instantaneous knowledge of results (correction), letter by letter if necessary. Simpler teaching machine devices might use mimeographed sheets with a special answer punchboard—the student answers the multiple choice question by punching a hole into an answer sheet, and the depth

\*Edward B. Fry, Glen Bryan, and Joseph Rigney, "Teaching Machines: An Annotated Bibliography," 1 *Audio-Visual Communications Review*, Supplement, 1960.

of the hole tells him if his choice was right or wrong.

It thus becomes apparent that teaching machines do not have much in common in physical appearance. Let us try to determine what they do have in common. (1) They present information in small units which require some form of active response from the student. (2) The student is immediately informed as to the correctness of his response. (3) The material taught is usually carefully programmed (sequenced). It might be noted that motion pictures, tachistoscopes, and most audio visual devices do not have these attributes.

The psychological principles involved here are familiar to all teachers: the careful sequencing, student activity, and rewarding the student by telling him he is correct. However, some psychologists say that most teachers do not pay enough attention to these important principles. Furthermore, some psychologists point out that under conventional methods the teacher cannot follow these methods fully enough to promote maximum learning. For example, in doing a reading comprehension exercise, the student should know immediately after each answer whether or not he is correct before he proceeds to the next item, and not be given some vague lump score the next day.

It may be economically unfeasible to have one teacher for each child, but it may not be economically unfeasible to have one simple teaching machine for each child, or at least a machine which he can use for a small

part of the school day. Teaching machines now on the market cost far less than a typewriter, and a few would cost less than the total sum of a pupil's required texts.

Teaching machines can be used for many facets of the reading program. Some machines show reading readiness pictures under transparent keys. The student does discrimination drills by simply putting his finger on the correct matching picture or symbol. Reading comprehension is a natural for machines which require the student to answer questions based on reading a prescribed passage. Vocabulary improvement is another natural for both the write-in type and the multiple-choice type of machine. Context cues can be taught by having the student supply the missing word in a sentence. Phonics can be taught to very young readers by having the pupil match letter sounds to pictures. More advanced word attack rules can be taught, much the same as other subject matter, by having the student restate principles and further prove his knowledge on examples.

Reading skills are very important for the use of teaching machines in nearly all subject matter areas because the overwhelming proportion of stimulus items involves prose. The automated devices can use numerical or other symbols, pictures or sometimes even auditory or motion picture stimulus items, but most devices for most subjects rely on the textbook type of reading skills. Hence, if teaching machines come into wider use the importance of reading will be increased, not decreased.

Those who write curriculum programs for teaching machines will have to have a good knowledge of readability levels. A social studies program for the third grade must be at the correct readability level or learning efficiency will be definitely decreased. Teachers who are responsible for the selection of curriculum programs should therefore know something of the readability formulas currently available.

Although there is not a wide variety of curriculum materials readily available for teaching machines, some major companies are currently at work on development. If teaching machines "catch on," probably many major publishers of textbooks will be developing teaching machine programs, both as the chief source of instruction and as supplementary material to more traditional textbook and classroom presentations.

To give an idea of the breadth of the material that machines can teach, here is a list of topics that have at least preliminary programs developed for teaching machines: Elementary Spelling, Boolean Algebra, Electronics Trouble Shooting, Golf, Arithmetic, Statistics, Logic, Psychology, German, English Grammar and Molecular Theory for First Graders. Hence we can see that machines can teach a wide variety of subjects, and there is no reason to suppose that the

subject of reading will escape their areas of operation.

A word of reassurance is perhaps in order for teachers who fear replacement by automation. There appears to be no such possibility. However, much of the factual presentation, necessary repetition and drill, and occasionally new subject matter not known by the teacher can be taught by machine. The machine can relieve the teachers of hours of the drudgery of correcting students' papers and preparing routine assignments so that she can spend more of her time with individual pupils or in more creative aspects of teaching.

There is another important aspect of teaching machines that we have not mentioned, and that is the field of educational research. Certainly the field of reading has had as many, or more, conflicting research reports about new methods of presentation, new curriculum organization, new emphasis of older methods, etc., as any other subject field. The dark cloud over many of these studies is the "teacher variable." Did the teachers favor the experimental method and thus add some experimental contaminant such as enthusiasm? Machines can help solve this problem.

*(Edward Fry is the Director of the Reading Clinic at Loyola University of Los Angeles.)*

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## What RESEARCH Says to the Reading Teacher

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### A New Bibliography on Phonics

The teacher of reading, and most particularly the teacher who wishes to keep abreast of research in the field, must often feel that he is at the mercy of the bibliographer. All too frequently he finds that he has ready access to summaries of research up to the period of about five years ago, but after that time he must go hunting through general indexes of articles and book lists in order to keep up to date. Since titles alone are often misleading or non-informative, he seeks annotations where he can find them. Reading the references, at the end, often takes far less time than the location process.

In spite of the difficulty of the job, reviewing recent research is admittedly worth while. The more controversial the area, the more interesting and rewarding it is to be able to keep a finger on the pulse of the workers in the field. The research reported today is cited as a trend tomorrow. But, at close quarters, it is hard to discern trends or reach conclusions in the absence of frequent summaries.

Let us think about phonics. The field is still in active ferment. The only entries indexed under this heading in the recent Sixtieth Yearbook

underline this fact.\* They deal with the development of modern systems of phonics out of modern insights into phonetics, on the one hand, and with the impact of public opinion on phonics instruction on the other. Indicating that phonics is still a center of controversy is one thing. Testimony in favor of including phonics as one method of deriving meaning is an answer to controversy, and probably a satisfactory one so far as it goes. But basic research on how to introduce phonics most effectively, and the study of what happens to reading as the pupil applies this technique of word analysis, needs far more emphasis than it receives in most summaries. Without constant re-examination of practice, the principles of reading instruction tend to remain comfortably on the platform or in the textbook. Genuine research, critically evaluated, can get them back into the classroom.

This column, therefore, is devoted to a list of recent research in phonics. Put into the setting of research summaries, the list for the most part takes

\**Development in and Through Reading*, pp. 40-42, 98-99. The Sixtieth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, 1961.

up studies which are dated after the articles by Nila B. Smith (14) and Emmett A. Betts (3), which covered research until about the middle of 1957. Brief annotations have been included in the hope that they will help the reader locate easily the references which are closest in line with his interests. The list is not, of course, exhaustive. But it attempts to include most of the references which are easily accessible to reading teachers in the United States and Canada.

This is a brief list. The trends, if any, do not emerge very clearly. But if it is read carefully, the very omissions prove interesting, possibly significant. Certain questions might be asked. Is phonics purely a technique of interest to the primary grade teacher? Where are the phoneticists with their insights? What happens to the college student who needs training in word attack skills? Does this sample suggest that we are doing enough basic research under carefully controlled conditions?

1. AARON, IRA E. "What Teachers and Prospective Teachers Know About Phonics Generalizations." *Journal of Educational Research*, 53 (May, 1960), 323-330.

A survey of primary, intermediate, and junior and senior high school teachers in service and a similar group of teachers in training. Interesting results include a finding that primary teachers are no more familiar with the principles of phonics tested than are teachers at higher grade levels.

2. BEAR, DAVID E. "Phonics for First Grade: A Comparison of Two

Methods." *Elementary School Journal*, 59 (April, 1959), 394-402.

Experimental classrooms followed a synthetic phonic method (moving from word parts to whole words) while control groups used an analytic word method. All phonic training was used in addition to work in a basal reader. Initial study of the results favored the synthetic method.

3. BETTS, EMMETT A. "Phonics: Practical Considerations Based on Research." *Elementary English*, 33 (October, 1956), 357-71.

Summarizes pertinent research as given in 199 reports. From this basis a series of important issues and principles is derived.

4. BETTS, EMMETT A. "Phonics: Syllables." *Education*, 79 (May, 1959), 557-63.

This article describes a systematic program for teaching phonics.

5. BLOOMER, RICHARD H. "An Investigation of an Experimental First Grade Phonics Program." *Journal of Educational Research*, 53 (January, 1960), 188-93.

Two groups of comparable level on the Gates Reading Readiness Test were measured after first-grade training. One group acquired a sight vocabulary before phonics was introduced, while the other (experimental) group received the phonics training first. The experimental group exceeded the control group after twenty-four weeks in word recognition and sentence reading; no significant difference was found in paragraph reading. The author notes the importance of readiness for phonics instruction.

6. BOLLING, REXFORD W. "An

Analysis of 1392 Words That Retarded Readers Could Not Identify in a Silent Reading Activity." *Journal of Educational Research*, 51 (February, 1958), 453-58.

The words which retarded readers found difficult are analyzed according to word structure and the common elements in words more appropriate to the reading level of the pupils are compared with these "difficult" words.

7. DURRELL, DONALD E. "Success in First Grade Reading." *Journal of Education*, 140 (February, 1958), 1-48.

An extensive analysis of the reading of over two thousand first-grade pupils. In this controlled experiment one feature of the more successful method is a program of systematic presentation of letter knowledge and phonics development.

8. FAY, LEO C. *Improving the Teaching of Reading by Teacher Experimentation*. Bulletin of the Indiana University School of Education, 34 (No. 5), September, 1958.

One of the eleven teacher-designed experiments discussed in this report deals with phonics in word study.

9. HORN, ERNEST W. "Phonetics and Spelling." *Elementary School Journal*, 57 (May, 1957), 424-32.

This analysis of the ten thousand words in Horn's Basic Writing Vocabulary underlines the phonetic irregularity of common English words and the difficulties faced by pupils in building word recognition techniques.

10. KELLY, BARBARA CLINE. "The Economy Method Versus the Scott Foresman Method in Teaching

Second-Grade Reading in the Murphysboro Public Schools." *Journal of Educational Research*, 51 (February, 1958), 465-69.

In this paired experiment, the one hundred pupils using the phonics-oriented program had scores which were superior, to a statistically significant degree, to those using the basic reader program.

11. LUSER, CAROLYN, STANTON, EILEEN, and DOYLE, CHARLES I. "Effect of an Audio-Visual Phonics Aid in the Intermediate Grades." *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 49 (February, 1958), 28-30.

One of the few recent reports which deals with phonics instruction above the primary grades. The use of forty-three drill lessons on phonics was examined in relation to measured status in oral reading, paragraph meaning, and spelling. Control groups, which did not use the drill lessons, were significantly lower in final standing on these aspects of language.

12. PURCELL, BARBARA A. "Methods of Teaching Reading: A Report on a Tri-State Survey." *Elementary School Journal*, 58 (May, 1958), 449-53.

The sections of this report dealing with phonics reveal that only about 6 per cent of teachers sampled for the study relied on incidental work in phonics. Most teachers preferred systematic provisions for word analysis, generally in close conjunction with the material of the basic reader. The states of Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia were surveyed.

13. RUSIDELL, MABEL F. "Inter-

relations of Functional Phonic Knowledge, Reading, Spelling, and Mental Age." *Elementary School Journal*, 57 (February, 1957), 264-67.

For the scores of the 315 third-graders tested there were substantial intercorrelations among reading, spelling, and phonic knowledge. While mental ability is an important element in these intercorrelations, specific training has a significant bearing on performance.

14. SMITH, NILA B. "What Research Says About Phonics Instruction." *Journal of Educational Research*, 51 (September, 1957), 1-9.

A systematic review of research under the heading of: Historical cycles in phonics, Are the schools teaching phonics at the present time? Should we teach phonics? When should phonics be taught?

15. SPARKS, PAUL E., and FAY, LEO C. "An Evaluation of Two Methods of Teaching Reading." *Elementary School Journal*, 57 (April, 1957), 386-90.

A pair of schools experimented with the *Phonetic Keys to Reading* series versus a conventional basic

program in Grades 1 through 3. The phonetic series seemed to produce superior results in comprehension as tested through the end of Grade 2; initial lead in vocabulary for this group was not maintained. By the end of Grade 3 and in Grade 4 no significant differences were found. The authors concluded that the conventional method gave enough phonetic training to provide pupils with necessary word attack skills. They cite the need for further study of methods which "tend to overstress a particular phase of the mechanics of reading."

16. WEPMAN, JOSEPH M. "Auditory Discrimination, Speech, and Reading." *Elementary School Journal*, 60 (March, 1960), 325-33.

A study which reiterates the need to examine readiness for phonics instruction. Relationships among auditory discrimination, articulation, reading ability, and intelligence were studied for a group of pupils in Grades 1 and 2. It is suggested that initially grouping pupils as auditory or visual learners will avoid instructional pitfalls in the early stages of the reading program.

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## What Other Magazines Say About READING

BY

**MURIEL POTTER LANGMAN**

*Eastern Michigan University and Hawthorn Center, Northville, Michigan*

DALE, EDGAR, and EICHHOLZ, GERHARD. *Children's Knowledge of Words—An Interim Report*. Bureau of Educational Research and Service, The Ohio State University, January 1961.

This is a report on a project the aim of which is to list all the words known by at least 67 per cent of elementary and high school pupils. Included are lists for fourth, sixth, eighth, tenth and twelfth grades.

MOSS, BERNICE H. "Luring the Non-Reader." *NEA Journal*, January 1961.

In this article a third-grade teacher describes an experience approach which was effective in involving unmotivated children in reading activities. The egocentrism of these immature children was effectively used in obtaining their co-operation in learning.

EAGLE, ALBERT. *Literary Phonetic English*. Published by the Pitman Press, Bath, England, 1955. "No rights reserved."

"The object of this book is to make printed English a language which any foreigner whose own language was founded on our alphabet could, even if he did not know a word of English, read aloud at sight. . . . Till this has been in some measure achieved, English can never take its place as a world language. . . ."

The book contains proposals for

spelling simplification, a glossary of "respelt" words, and conclusions and suggestions for bringing about spelling reform.

CHALL, JEANNE. "The Encyclopedia as an Educational Tool." *Teachers College Record*, February 1961.

Dr. Chall reviews the 1960 edition of the *World Book Encyclopedia* and points out how few recommendations are to be found in textbooks as to the use of encyclopedias in instruction.

ROBINSON, HELEN M. "Summary of Investigations Relating to Reading, July 1, 1959 to June 30, 1960." *Journal of Educational Research*, February 1961.

Dr. Robinson here continues the valuable annual review carried on for so many years by Dr. William S. Gray. The headings are "Summaries Relating to Specific Aspects of Reading," "Sociology of Reading," "Physiology and Psychology of Reading," and "Teaching of Reading."

DUNNING, STEPHEN. "Design for Outside Reading: A context for Remembering." *School Review*, Spring 1961.

This article discusses motivation, content and problems of using the individual reading design as a framework for growth in intellectual maturity through voluntary reading, organized

around self-selected themes. Among techniques suggested from the successful experiences of the writer are preparation for and explanation of the project, deadlines, explicit directions as to research techniques and location of pertinent books, individual conferences during the course of the project, class reports on projects during their progress, deadlines for re-thinking and improving outlines—in fact a time schedule organizing each phase of the whole. The writer observes that most students remember little from their course work experience and expresses the belief that this kind of organized learning, with topics voluntarily selected and research conducted under careful direction, gives students knowledge they will retain and value.

COLEMAN, J. H., and JUNGEBLUT, ANN. "Children's Likes and Dislikes about What they Read." *Journal of Educational Research*, February 1961.

A group of 750 children, ages eight to twelve, in Grades Four, Five, and Six in several moderate-size cities in the east-coast, were the subjects of this study. Some additional third-graders were included. The procedure was to use some selections in Books 4, 5, and 6 of the Lippincott Reading for Meaning series and material from children's books, rated by the Lorge Readability Index with scores of 3.1 to 7.0. The titles indicate that the content deals with the natural and social sciences. The selections were rated by children whose reading ability was at, above, and below the difficulty level of the material.

The children rated the material by marking phrases ranging along a six-point scale from "like very very much"

to "dislike very very much." There was also opportunity for the child to check when he was unable to read a selection.

One of the purposes of this study was to determine which selections should be retained in a collection on the basis of interest. For the one selection on which the results were reported in detail, more than 80 per cent of 202 fifth-grade children rated a selection on lichens favorably; the observation is made that most of those who disliked it came from one industrial urban community. The writers ascribe this reaction to the lack of background for the information offered. There were also differences in strength of appeal by grade levels. One generally liked selection dealt with a dramatic incident about the Pony Express. This finding confirms previous work on the content of reading material especially enjoyed by children—suspense and excitement, little descriptive and expository material, and characters with whom the reader can identify.

The writers conclude with suggestions for further research. Our readers who are especially interested in reading interests of children may enjoy returning to Robert L. Thorndike's early and ingenious study of children's reading interests in relation to chronological and mental age, sex, and categories of interest, which is still useful and informative.

STAUFFER, R. G. "Breaking the Basal Reader Lock-Step." *Elementary School Journal*, February 1961.

This eclectic approach to the teaching of early reading is more moderate than its title. Many aspects of the organization of a reading program

which has self-selection as one of its important elements are described fully and helpfully. I wish Dr. Stauffer had also commented on the pitfalls of experience reading as an introduction to reading when used alone, and also on the immense range of differences in ability and experience which result in some children's being unable to profit from activities demanding maturity and independence. I still obstinately believe that it is not the basal reader which is at fault when children fail to become interested and enthusiastic about beginning reading, but the failure of the program to permit each child to advance at his own rate, including or excluding basal readers as part of instructional materials. However, let me recommend this article highly, for it says many things that needed saying.

RUSSELL, DAVID H. "Reading Research That Makes a Difference." *Elementary English*, February 1961.

Professor Russell names and discusses his selection of the "ten best" research studies in the history of reading instruction, including studies from the year 1917 to the present. He outlines briefly each study and explains its importance in influencing reading instruction through contributions to the understanding of the nature of the reading process.

SISTER MARY JULITTA. "A List of Books for Retarded Readers." *Elementary English*, February 1961.

This list provides Spache readability scores and interest level information about a large number of supplementary books of recent appearance. The titles are grouped by series and publishers. The list was compiled as a result of a

study of children's responses to the material.

WITTY, PAUL. "Televiewing by Children and Youth." *Elementary English*, February 1961.

As I looked at the summary of the average number of hours a week spent with TV, the only obvious change in viewing habits between 1951 and 1960 appeared to be that of teachers, who moved up from nine to twelve hours of viewing between 1951 and 1953, and held their ground. Otherwise things seem pretty much unchanged over the decade; parents and elementary school children spend about the same amount of time at it (around three hours a day on the average); high school children spend two hours (homework?), and teachers even less, somewhat under two hours. The article also provides a summary of the opinions of children, teachers, and parents regarding the values of TV experience, and a plea for a balance in leisure-time pursuits.

Since in the long run the level of programs will be determined by viewers, teachers in self-defense ought to be helping children to evaluate viewing experiences, guiding them particularly to appreciation of what is good in both amusement and news. ETV is another question.

VITE, IRENE W. "Grouping Practices in Individualized Reading." *Elementary English*, February 1961.

This article at least points out the necessity for reserving the baby when we throw out the bath water. Reading instruction continues to improve in techniques and effectiveness as it becomes more and more eclectic, in line with recognition of the existence of

individual differences. Dr. Vite spells out very concretely the details of classroom management that go with the successful use of individualized reading, i.e., what the teacher does, how the situation works and appears to an observer, how grouping is still done for a variety of purposes and occasions even though reading is individualized. She stresses socialization as well as learning, and makes clear how teacher planning and organization are of the essence of the successful eclectic program.

POWELL, MARVIN, and PARSLEY, K. M., JR. "Relationship Between First Grade Reading Readiness and Second Grade Reading Achievement." *Journal of Educational Research*, February 1961.

In this study the Lee-Clark Reading Readiness Test was used to measure beginning first graders, and the Lower Primary level of the California Reading Test administered at the beginning of second grade, making the article's title rather misleading. The intention was to evaluate the Lee-Clark as a predictive instrument. The subjects were 863 children, followed through the first-grade year.

The authors conclude that the Lee-Clark test "is a useful instrument for predicting the general reading achievement of a total group of First Graders . . . but there is reason to doubt its adequacy for such precise placement

especially at the lower levels" (i.e., low scores on the test). However, inasmuch as the reading readiness test is to determine the readiness of individuals, there is a contradiction in this statement. No doubt it has the weaknesses of most group tests, which were designed for comparing class measures of central tendency with national norms; in addition there is the known fact that group measures of young children are less reliable than those for older ones. The question really is whether any reading tests are individually diagnostic; I am sure they are if examined for quality of response, but diagnosis by score is less useful. For years I have been saying off the top of my head that the children who get scores in the top quartile on a readiness test *probably* will learn to read in first grade, and those in the bottom quartile *probably* won't, but after all the reported correlation with reading success for any readiness test is not 1.0 or even .90. For the children who are in the middle 50 per cent, success or failure may depend on maturation, opportunity, small differences in sensory endowment or intellectual capacity, or sociological factors. These writers would agree, I am sure. It is certainly worth noting, also, that vocabulary and comprehension as measured by the California Reading Test at this level make distinctly separate contributions to the prediction of reading success.

## Interesting BOOKS for the Reading Teacher

BY

**HARRY T. HAHN**  
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### More Phonics

When the following text was published last year, M. D. Vernon (The University, Reading, Berks, England) submitted a review for *THE READING TEACHER*, September, 1960. Later, when the book was printed in the United States, we asked an American authority, George Spache, to prepare a critical analysis of this controversial material.

**DIACK, HUNTER.** *Reading and the Psychology of Perception*. Nottingham, England: Peter Skinner Publishing, 1960. Pp. 155 + xxiii. \$6.00.

Diack devotes the first third of this brief book to an attack upon the Gestalt school of psychology. He is anxious to cast doubt upon at least three major tenets of this school, (1) the Gestalt or form or pattern of objects, (2) the theory that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, and (3) the concept of insight in thinking. He attempts to refute these beliefs by such means as citing the inconsistencies among various Gestalt writers, and by fragmentary quotations divorced from their contextual meaning. Diack further supports his position by pointing out the decline in popularity of this school of thought, due in part to the subsequent disproof of some of its philosophical theories and concepts of brain function.

This tactic of demolishing a straw man or destroying acceptance of a defunct school of thought is essential to leading the reader to a readiness for the acceptance of Diack's own hypothesis, which we shall consider later. All this discussion of Gestalt theories has obviously only one purpose—to undermine the reader's adherence to the idea that the perception of a form involves the recognition of a figure as a related whole distinct from its background, rather than the contribution of its separate parts. Such a Gestalt concept underlies the current reading theory that word recognition occurs largely by the total visual and auditory pattern rather than by recognition of the constituent letters. If, like Diack, we too ignore the implications of the development of visual perception in children in the works of Gesell, Piaget, M. D. Vernon, William S. Gray, and others, we are ready to accept his new theory of perception. However, it is a bit puzzling to understand why the author devotes so much space to the lengthy attack upon the Gestalt psychologists when even he recognizes that the concept of whole word recognition was derived largely from the earlier experiments of Cattell, Erdmann and Dodge, Decroly, and many others of the late nineteenth century.

Diack's definition of perception in reading includes the belief that it is based upon the recognition of details rather than wholes. Since letters have meanings in that they represent sounds, letters and their sounds form the basic elements of word recognition. Therefore, he holds that when the child employs the total pattern or major parts of the word, context or picture clues, without resorting to the translation of letters into their sounds, this is not *real reading*.

In support of his theory Diack cites a number of his experiments involving the brief exposure of unknown words, of words previously announced, and of mutilated or incomplete forms of words already announced. Like thousands of American reading teachers who have used tachistoscopic devices, Diack discovered that among adults some words can be exposed too rapidly or at too great a distance for recognition, that known whole words can be read in the same time needed to recognize only a few letters of an unknown word, and finally that a mutilated but known word will be read as though it were the complete word. His mistaken conclusion that known words cannot be perceived immediately (in 1/100 of a second) is due to the crudity of his procedures, for a great deal of tachistoscopic training is carried on in American reading classes at exactly this same speed.

Diack uses these experiments to support the idea that, in the absence of auditory or other clues, visual analysis of a word in terms of the sound equivalents of letters *must occur*. For example, when the task involves an unknown word or a meaningless group of

letters, the reader may see only those few at the beginning or end. To see more, Diack reasons, the reader must pay attention to the letter sounds. Such analysis, he believes, is possible for experienced but not for beginning readers unless they have been previously trained in letter sounds.

Although his experiments demonstrate the values of context (auditory image) for word recognition by wholes or significant major details, Diack eludes the obvious implications by eliminating context from his definition of perception. Since all other clues are not part of real reading, then, Diack speciously reasons, reading must occur by attention to letter sounds. Since the experiments indicate the use of beginning and ending letters as an aid to recognition, Diack again concludes that this is directed to letter sounds, not to letter form, as these experiments have more commonly been interpreted.

The author conducted another series of experiments with a few children between the ages of eighteen months and four years. These children showed learning in the tasks of discriminating or matching forms or words or letters and in matching the written and spoken word, particularly when details that aided in the discriminations were pointed out to them. These crude observations again lead the author to the conclusion that details of words (letter sounds) are the most significant elements of perception.

Having thus disposed of the whole word method to his satisfaction, Diack proceeds to refute the principles of interest, meaning, frequency of use in reading, and auditory familiarity that

guide the selection of vocabularies in beginning readers. His readers are constructed of a wide variety of words controlled only in the consistency of letter sounds. These words need not differ in visual pattern and, in fact, the first exercises contain only three-letter words. Readiness for this material is promoted by a small amount of preliminary training in the form of games involving words and their conceptual meanings. Diack's concept of phonic consistency is quite unique, for he considers it to include such words as *high*, *through*, *little*, *know*, *once*, *laugh*, etc.

A trial of Diack and Daniels *Royal Road Readers* with a group of retarded readers is reviewed briefly by the author. The results produced, to the authors' satisfaction, proof that the Phonic Word Method promoted word recognition superior to that among pupils taught by mixed methods. Averaging results from several classes, lack of control of such factors as intelligence or socio-economic background, and failure to use tests of the significance of the differences render these results inconclusive, although Diack considers the results confirmed by literally "scores of previous studies," as well as a number he alludes to in the text as being falsely interpreted by their authors.

We may close this review by suggesting that this book will prove most interesting to those who are active in research in word recognition and perception. Others may find the confused organization, specious reasoning, and inconsistencies too difficult to follow. The lack of competent editorial work is evidenced in such oddities as chapters of two to three pages, in a bibliography

which does not include many of the references alluded to in the text, a lack of cross-references between textual citations and bibliography, and the absence of any identification of the exact sources of the many quotations. In fact, the reader may be amused to discover that some of the anonymous quotations used to support the discussion are actually drawn from the author's own other writings. In many places, the thoughts of the author are clouded with inconsistencies and evidences of faulty logic. He criticizes most of the earlier research on visual perception because the subjects were adults, but uses similar subjects in his major experiments. He forces the definition of perception in reading into a framework that seems to fit his theory, without justifying or proving his definition. Finally, he forces the reader toward an acceptance of letter sounds as the basis of word recognition, by falsely excluding all other clues to recognition and meaning from the act of reading.

—GEORGE SPACHE,  
*University of Florida*

### It Started in 1940

HARRIS, ALBERT J. *How to Increase Reading Ability*. Fourth Edition, Revised. New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1961. Pp. 624. \$6.00.

"Sound!" has been the term used most frequently to describe this popular textbook ever since the first edition was published in 1940. Four editions and twenty printings later, there appears to be general agreement that this readable guide to developmental and remedial reading methods is still one of the most valuable texts of its kind on the market.

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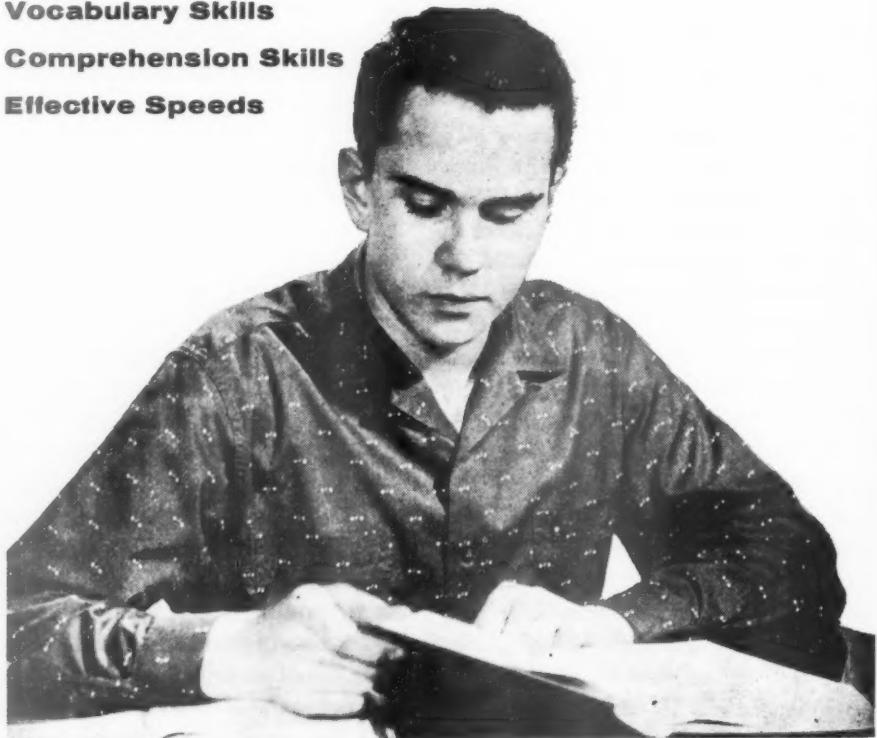
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One of the reasons for this is that Albert Harris has conscientiously evaluated newer trends, practices, and materials and has frequently incorporated his findings in his text by making necessary revisions. We hope that he continues to do so.

### Poetry Can Be Fun

HUGHES, ROSALIND. *Let's Enjoy Poetry*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1961. Pp. 298. \$4.20.

This reviewer suspects that intermediate grade teachers who discover this delightful anthology of children's verse are certain to find ways to make their teaching of poetry more enjoyable. The teaching suggestions which follow each poem provide imaginative and interesting ideas calculated to arouse spontaneous and enthusiastic responses from boys and girls. Teachers who have been seeking ways of developing choral speaking just for fun will be particularly pleased with this volume.

### Games to Play

WAGNER, GUY, and HOSIER, MAX. *Reading Games*. Darien, Conn.: The Educational Publishing Corporation, 1961. Pp. 128. \$1.95.

This small paper-bound volume provides many instructional games designed to strengthen the reading skills program. If used judiciously, which implies not as mere busy work, the games undoubtedly will provide many rewarding experiences for pupils and teachers. A number of reading skills have received these authors' attention, including comprehension, word recognition, critical thinking, and vocabulary enrichment. The instructions are brief

and lucid, and the contents should encourage young people to design their own games on occasion.

### Time For Worry

MAZURKIEWICZ, ALBERT J., Editor. *Controversial Issues in Reading*. Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Reading Conference, Lehigh University, January 31, 1960, Volume I. Bethlehem, Pa.: The Reading and Study Clinic, Department of Education, Lehigh University, 1961. Pp. 78. \$2.50.

In answer to the editor's question "How well are we teaching reading?" Emmett Betts included in his remarks the statement, "The members of our profession who say there is nothing to worry about are the ones about whom we should worry." Evidently there is much to worry about, judging from the speeches of Jeanette Veatch, Rudolf Flesch, Roy Kress, Helen Huus, Morton Botel, and many other well-known persons who appeared on this program. The carefully prepared manuscripts which were submitted for publication make interesting reading. One of the gems is a report by Donald Cleland entitled "A Review of the McCracken Method of Teaching Reading."

### Individualized Reading

LAZAR, MAY, DRAPER, MARCELLA K., and SCHWIETART, LOUISE H. *A Practical Guide to Individualized Reading*. New York: Bureau of Educational Research, Board of Education of the City of New York, Publication No. 40, October, 1960. Pp. 158.

This monograph is designed to co-ordinate sound educational theory with desirable classroom practice within the

framework of a developmental approach to reading. The text deals with the rationale behind individualized reading, basic principles underlying its features that give this approach its special qualities, and practical suggestions for, and examples of, its implementation in the classroom. Over a period of years frequent mimeographed publications prepared by the Bureau indicated that the research staff was conducting a careful study of reading instruction designed to help children become interested in books, to love books, and to use books for personal fulfillment and growth. The research has resulted in a comprehensive guide for teachers and supervisors in the elementary school. It provides a wonderful supplement to materials already available on this topic.

At the time this report was prepared, the Director of the Bureau of Educational Research, J. Wayne Writhstone, wrote that the policy concerning the price and availability of this monograph to outside educators had not been set, and possibly would not be determined until September, 1961.

#### **Appraising Reading Progress**

AUSTIN, MARY C., BUSH, CLIFFORD L., and HUEBNER, MILDRED H. *Reading Evaluation*. New York: Ronald Press, 1961. Pp. 256. \$4.50.

There has been an obvious need for a textbook which focused its attention on current procedures, materials, and practices for evaluating reading progress in the school and classroom. Austin, Bush, and Huebner offer this unique guide to satisfy this need. They have made a significant contribution.

The first half of the text is devoted to specific practices for appraising group and individual reading skills. Informal tests receive considerable attention, and an informal reading inventory is included for the teacher's use. While standardized tests are not subjected to a critical evaluation, charts of selected tests are provided with a breakdown of the skills which they treat. School administrators will be particularly pleased with the final half of the text which gives detailed plans for conducting school-wide reading surveys. Information as to costs, preparation, interpretation, and follow-up is included, and examples are cited from school programs.

#### **High School Reading Instruction**

BAMMAN, HENRY A., HOGAN, URSULA, and GREENE, CHARLES E. *Reading Instruction in the Secondary School*. New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1961. Pp. 266. \$4.25.

The idea that all high school teachers can teach reading skills in their content areas is the subject of this small book. The authors offer concrete advice and direction to school administrators as well as to teachers of science, social studies, English, industrial arts, mathematics, remedial reading, music, and homemaking. Much of the guidance is sound and helpful and might be used to arouse an interest in a school-wide study of this thorny problem.

The chief criticism of the book is its brevity. The authors treat the issues with authority, but they seem too satisfied with a few sketchy examples or illustrations to support their views. Many secondary teachers are anxious

to do a better job of teaching reading skills. They want help in learning how. These people are apt to say "Tell me more!"

### For English Teachers

LOBAN, WALTER, RYAN, MARGARET, and SQUIRE, JAMES R. *Teaching Language and Literature*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1961. Pp. 748. \$7.50.

In contrast with *Reading Instruction in the Secondary School*, Loban, Ryan, and Squire generously share many appropriate teaching practices in their

voluminous text. In their splendid guide to English curriculum planning, the authors elaborate upon *what* is to be done in developing a junior and senior high school program. They show *how* it is to be done by citing examples including complete units of work, and then they reveal the importance of just *why* it's to be done. Suggestions are given for the improvement of reading instruction as well as plans for grouping young people in the classroom to make provisions for the wide range of individual differences which invariably exist.

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

BY

**WILLIAM D. SHELDON**

President, International Reading Association

IT IS USUALLY customary for the incoming president of the IRA to review the past achievements of the organization and to make cautious comments regarding events which will occur in the future. Because our organization has developed to maturity during a most exciting period in education there is much to reflect upon and a great deal to anticipate.

We have been fortunate indeed in our leadership. To join the distinguished company of past presidents—Mary C. Austin, A. Sterl Artley, George D. Spache, Albert J. Harris, Nancy Lerrick, and William S. Gray—is an honor indeed. Through their leadership the IRA has grown truly international and has assumed an important role among the educational organizations of our world.

During the past year a number of important contributions have been made to education by IRA as an organization and by individual members. We are sure that professional standards for reading instructors, presented by Charles Letson and his committee, will have a marked effect on future legislation regarding the certification standards for reading teachers. The standards will also serve as a guide to those who educate reading teachers. Linked with the statement from the professional standards committee is the significant study

of our immediate past president, Mary C. Austin. The statements contained in the *Torch Lighters* are bound to have an effect on programs which provide instruction in reading for future teachers.

The Studies and Research Committee took a significant step forward when it awarded its first research grant to Dr. Val Arnsdorf for \$500.00. It is our hope that many important studies will be sponsored in the future through the resources of IRA.

While we do not yet have a permanent headquarters for our Executive Secretary-Treasurer James M. McCallister and his staff, we are happy to report that the headquarters staff is now operating in a comfortable new location. During 1961-1962 we hope to take positive steps towards securing our own permanent headquarters. As this is a very serious step and one which will need a great deal of financial support it is probable that, while planning for a headquarters building will continue this year, the funds will not be available for several years.

Those of you who attended the meeting of the delegates know that a number of important issues were raised by the delegates. As IRA grows in its leadership role, it will be expected to take a firm position on

many basic questions involving ethical practices in reading instruction.

The meeting of the delegates was but one of the significant events of our sixth annual meeting held in St. Louis, May 4-6. The pre-convention meeting was again a marked success, and it was indicated that our members appreciated meetings geared to specific topics. The Board of Directors decided to include the pre-convention meetings as part of our general meeting. Thus IRA will sponsor a three-day program at our San Francisco meeting on May 3-5, 1962. Shelley Umans, Co-chairman with Jeanne Chall of the 1961 pre-conference meetings, will plan specific meetings for specialists in reading in coordination with other meetings.

Everyone seemed to agree that the St. Louis meeting was a success. Certainly Constance McCullough's opening address was a strong statement of the principles shared by many IRA members. Reaction to the many group meetings was extremely positive. Your president has received many helpful letters indicating the kinds of meetings which were more informative. A new level of expertise was reached in the handling of the 1961 convention. Much of this was due, of course, to program chairman Mary C. Austin, and the aid given to her by Charles Humphrey and Hinda Dillinger, the local co-chairman of the conference.

We expect a large increase in gen-

eral membership in 1961-1962 as IRA continues to increase its contributions to teachers.

**THE READING TEACHER**, increasing in significance each year as our educational publication, will expand to six issues during 1961-1962. The Board of Directors has indicated its confidence in Russell Stauffer by asking him to serve as editor for another four years.

Meetings co-sponsored with the Educational Records Bureau, the National Council of Teachers of English, The National Council for Social Studies, AERA, AASA, and ASCD will be planned by the President-elect, Morton Botel, with the cooperation of Ralph Staiger.

The year ahead can only be one of growth in the number of councils. LaVerne Strong, Organization Chairman, and the many able members of her committee are continuing to encourage new councils in various parts of the world. Most of the states of the United States and the province of Canada have active councils. It is hoped that councils will continue to grow both here and abroad, making ours a significant international organization.

We welcome any suggestions from IRA members which will serve to strengthen our organization in any of its varied activities. The president, the officers, and the Board of Directors will serve IRA in every way possible in 1961-1962.

## THE CLIP SHEET

Mary Elisabeth Coleman

University of Pennsylvania

### Necessary Luxuries

If you are caught in the dilemma between quantity and quality in the selection of books, take time out to read the critique by Helen Adams Masten in the introduction to the review of "Spring Books for Young People," *Saturday Review*, May 13, 1961. We teachers have been rightly concerned about the texts of the books we buy for children. Mrs. Masten points out that beauty of binding, artistic use of type, and excellence of lay-out and illustrations are remembered by children as essential characteristics of a book. She reminds us that adults tend to remember their beloved books of childhood in terms of feel and color.

Please look up this article in your library before you order more books for free reading in your classroom.

### Literature Units

If you are one of those English teachers who prefer to have students read complete works rather than excerpts in anthologies, you will be interested in the plan of Scholastic Book Services, which supplies a variety of paperbacks centered around a theme such as "Courage," for eighth grade, or "Mirrors," for ninth graders. The unit on mirrors is a study of characters in novels, biographies, and plays. A number of units suitable for grades seven to ten

are currently planned. To learn more about the program, write to Scholastic Book Services, Scholastic Magazine, Inc., 33 West 42nd Street, New York 36, N. Y.

### More Bookstores

After reading about high school bookstores in a previous "Clipsheet" column, Mr. William G. Dodds, Jr., Indian Hills Elementary School, Ohio, reminds me that some elementary schools have bookstores, too. He writes "... we have been selling books in our store for over a year . . . although we have a splendid library with two full-time librarians, we have found that the sale of selected paperbacks has stimulated interest in reading. It has helped to make reading the thing to do, if you please." The store, under a student manager, is staffed with clerks from the sixth grade.

If you want more information I am sure Mr. Dodds or some of the sixth-grade pupils would be glad to help you. The address is 1941 Sagamore Drive, Euclid 17, Ohio.

### Periodicals

Just as an informed adult should be acquainted with a number of newspapers, so should the children in school have an opportunity to read reports of current events from several sources. A weekly newspaper

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Civic Education Service, Incorporated, 1733 K Street, N.W., Washington 6, D.C.

#### A New Venture

Congratulations to the Niagara Frontier Council of the IRA on the inauguration of its first Annual Reading Conference on September 30, at State University College of Education at Buffalo, New York. If you are not a member of the Council, and so are not already informed, you may learn details from Miss Ruth Viox, 16 Chatsworth Avenue, Kenmore, New York, or from Miss Irene G. Heacock, 871 Colvin Boulevard, Kenmore 23, New York.

#### Books on Exhibit

If you missed the "Books on Ex-

hibit" display when you attended summer school this past summer, you will still find the briefly annotated entries in the catalogs a valuable reference. The 1960-61 exhibit represents a large number of book publishers and university presses. "Elementary and Junior High Library Books" includes 600 new titles for children from kindergarten through grade nine. "Books for Young Adults" describes 423 new titles.

Books on Exhibit, North Bedford Road, Mount Kisco, New York.

#### Awards

The John Newberry Medal was awarded this year to Scott O'Dell for *Island of the Blue Dolphins* (Houghton Mifflin). The Randolph Caldecott Medal was given to Nicholas Sidjakov for the illustrations in *Baboushka and The Three Kings* (Parnassus Press). Don't be content with reading the prize winners only. Add the runners-up to your list: *America Moved Forward*, by Gerald Johnson (William Morrow and Company); *Old Ramon*, by Jack Schaefer (Houghton Mifflin), and *The Cricket in Times Square*, by George Selden (Farrar, Straus and Cudahy). Leo Lionni, who illustrated *Inch by Inch* (Ivan Obolensky, Incorporated) was the runner-up for the Caldecott award.

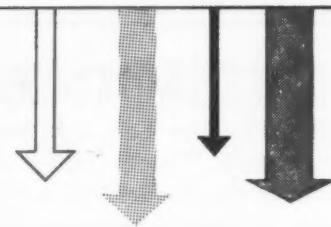
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